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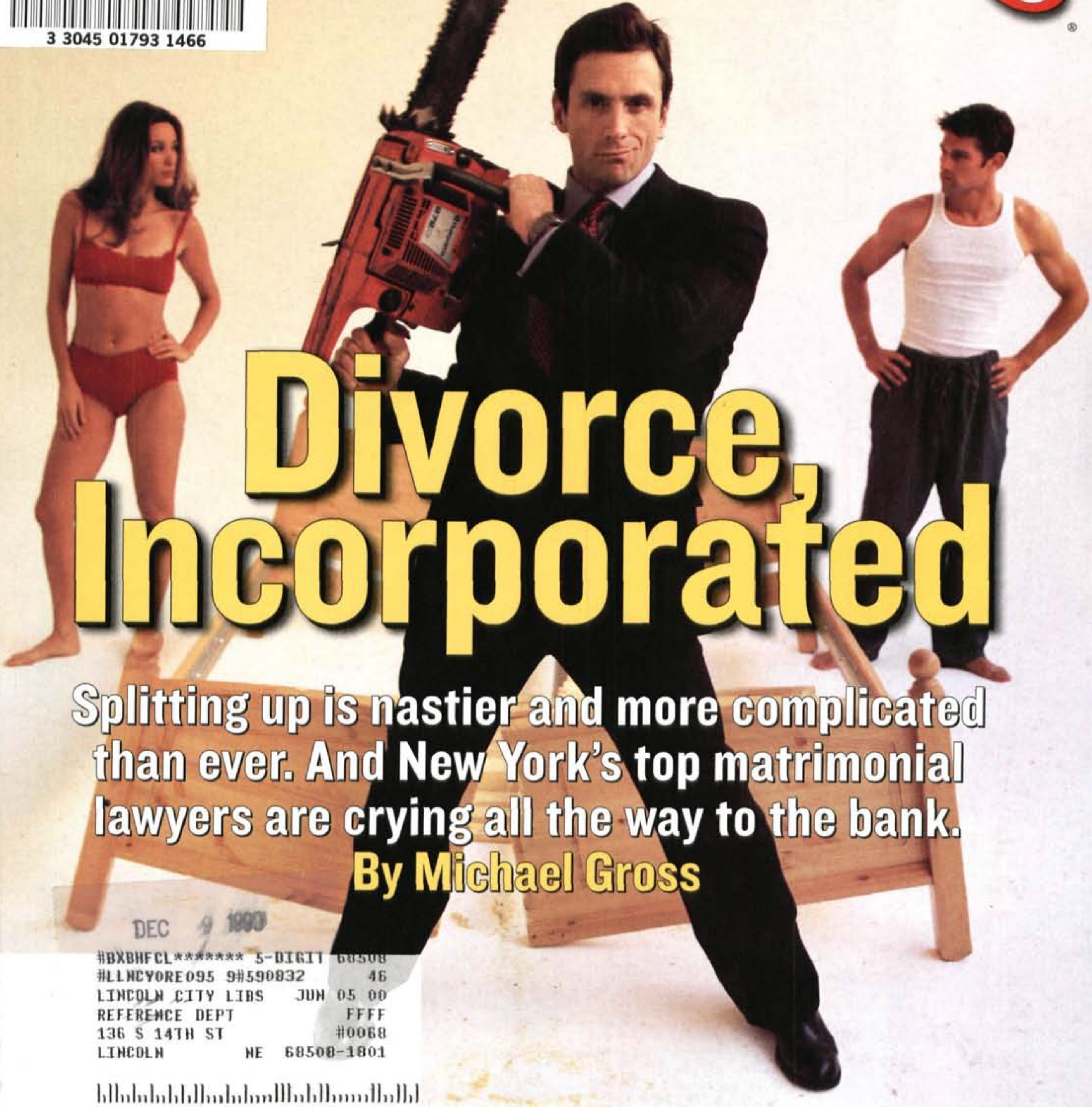

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Splitting up is nastier and more complicated than ever. And New York's top matrimonial lawyers are crying all the way to the bank.

By Michael Gross

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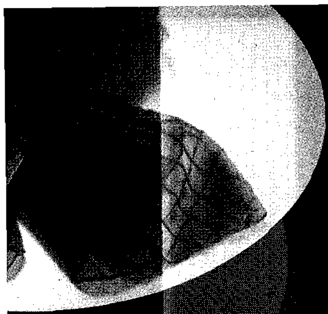

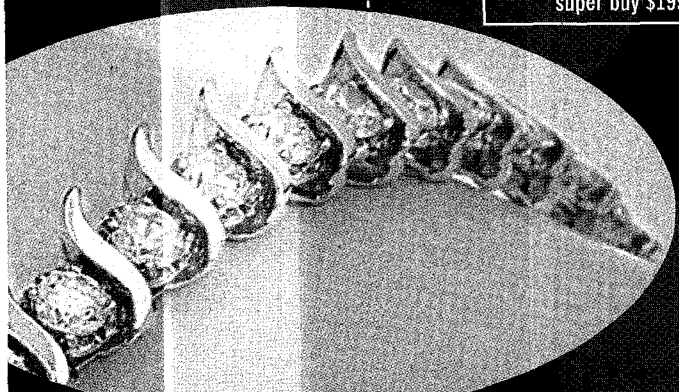

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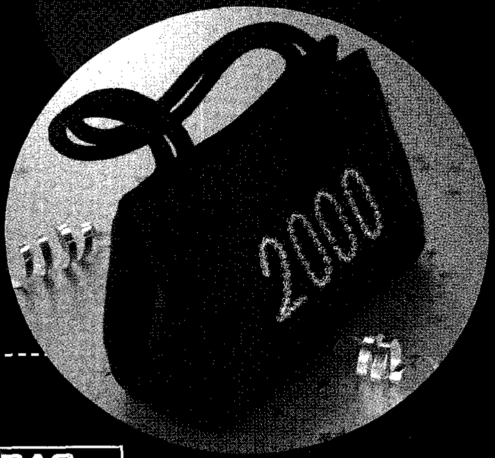

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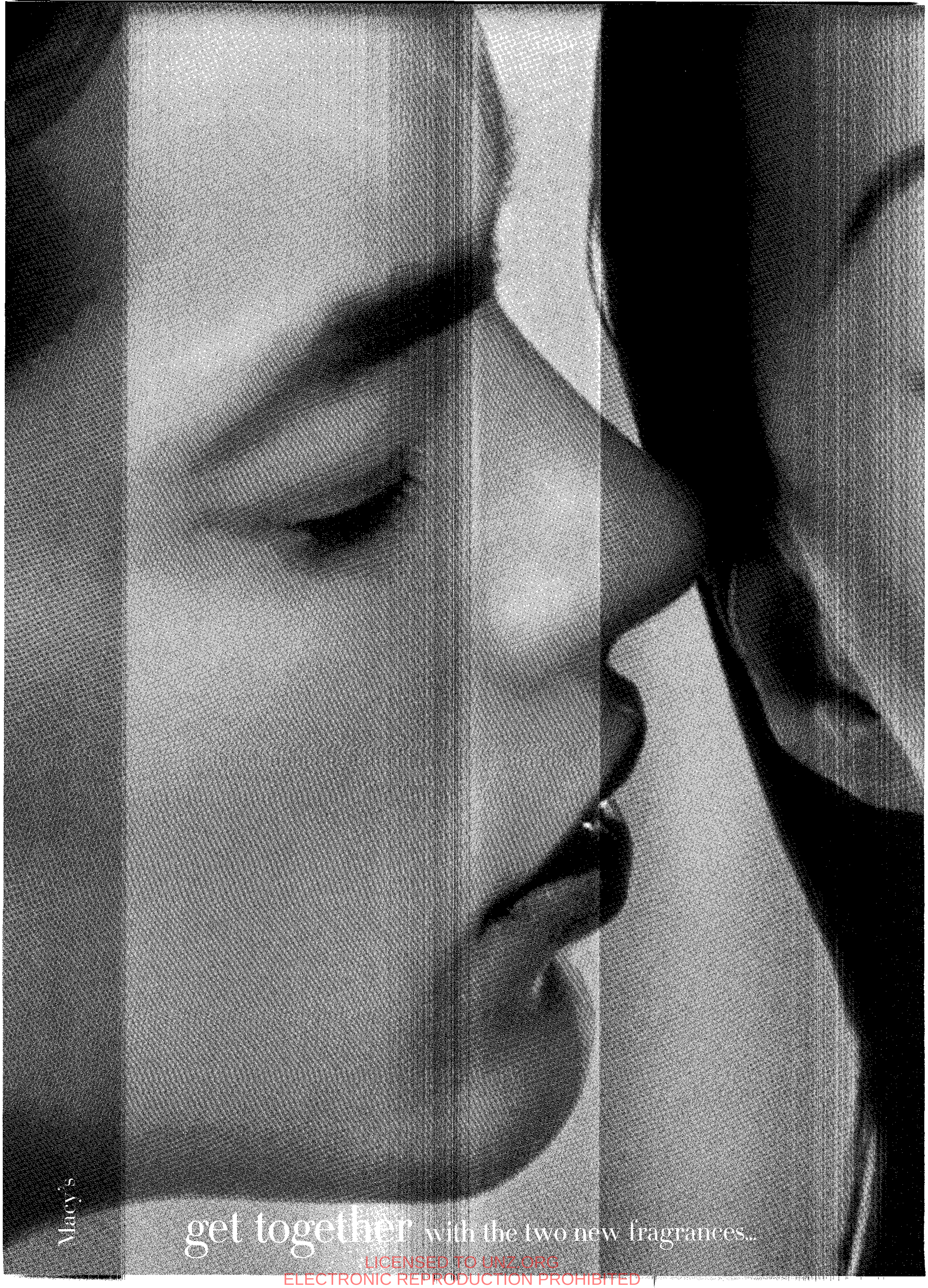
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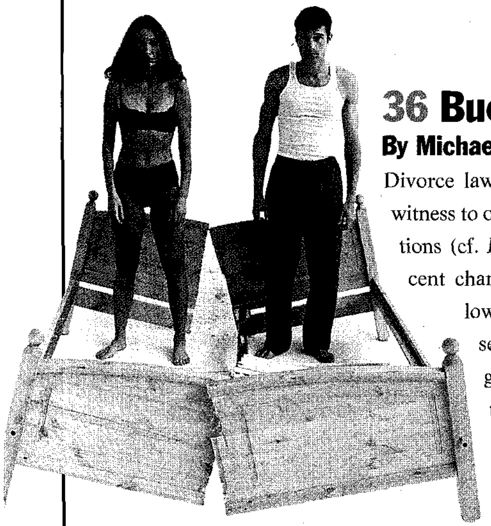

36 Buck Rakers

By Michael Gross

Divorce lawyers have always borne witness to our most heinous indiscretions (cf. *LeRoy* v. *LeRoy*). But recent changes in the law have allowed them to convert this seedy currency into ever-greater profits. The city's top divorce lawyers explain why splitting up is a $200 million growth industry—and how you can avoid becoming its latest victim. Plus: a guide to the matrimonial bar's elite ranks.

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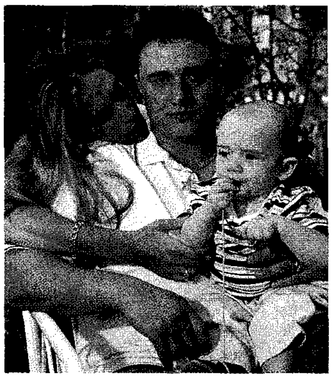
By Peggy Edersheim Kalb

How did a blue-collar chick from Edgewater make it to the top of the New York real-estate market? Not by selling apartments. Barbara Corcoran built her powerhouse firm with sheer promotional moxie and a brilliance at sound bites (and never underestimate those twelve red suits).

52 Murphy's Law

By Sheila Weller

The four police officers who killed Amadou Diallo last February have been all but convicted by the public and the pols, demanding payback for those shocking 41 bullets. Yet few New Yorkers even know their names. Meet Richard Murphy, speaking here for the first time. Facing life in prison, his real trial begins January 3.



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By Robert Kolker

A funny thing happened on the way to the millennium: While no one was looking, the party of the century turned into a Blockbuster night. The boldfaced names that make Manhattan whir are getting out of town, promoters are dumping their big-ticket bashes, and top chefs are taking the evening off. What's off and what's on—and what you'll have to do to enjoy the festivities of your choice.

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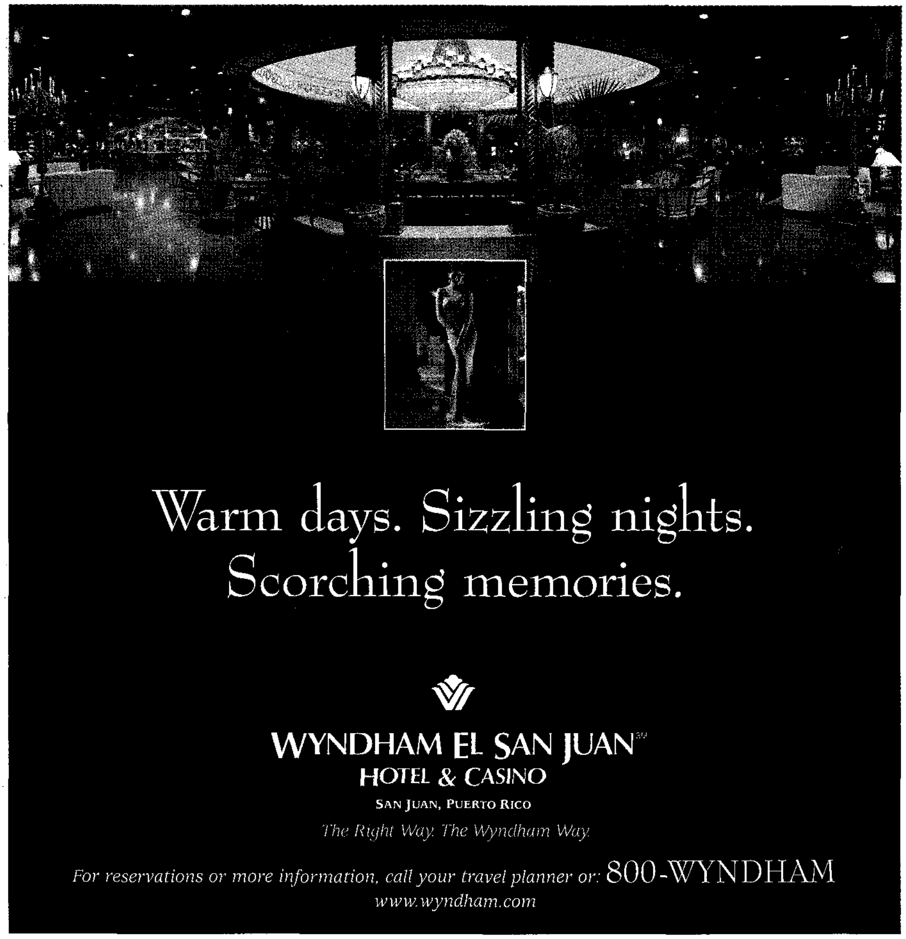

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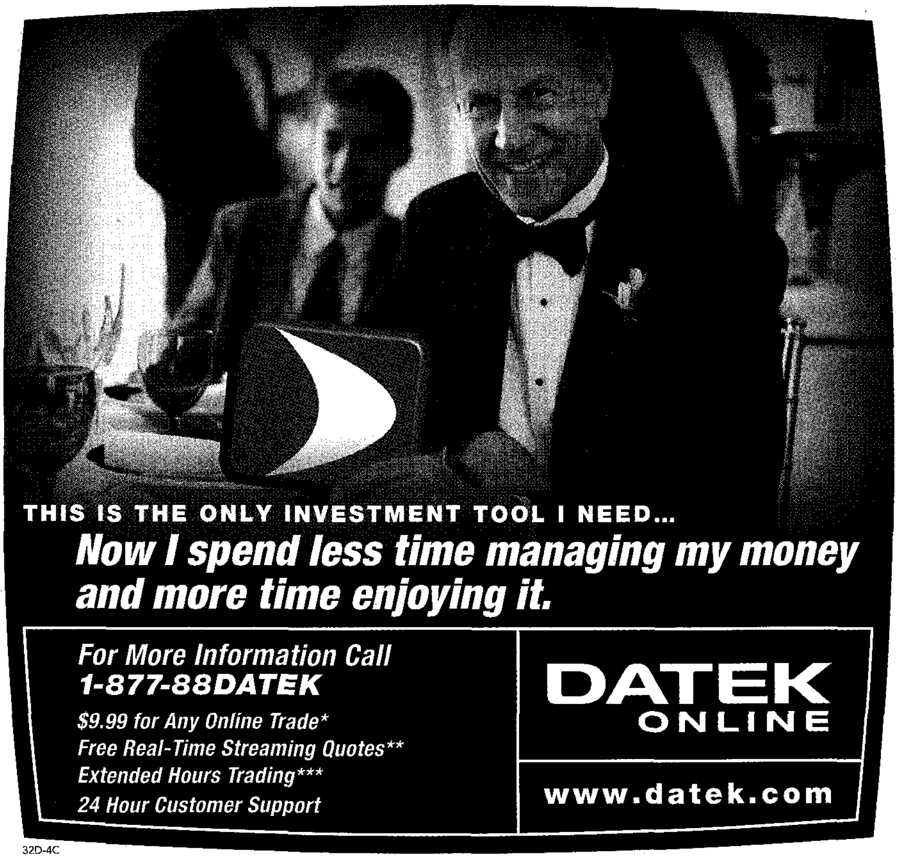

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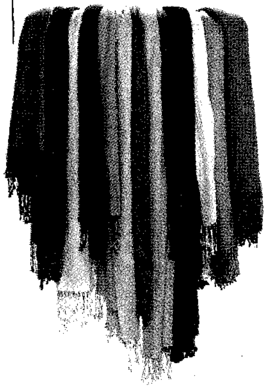

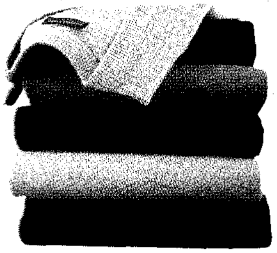

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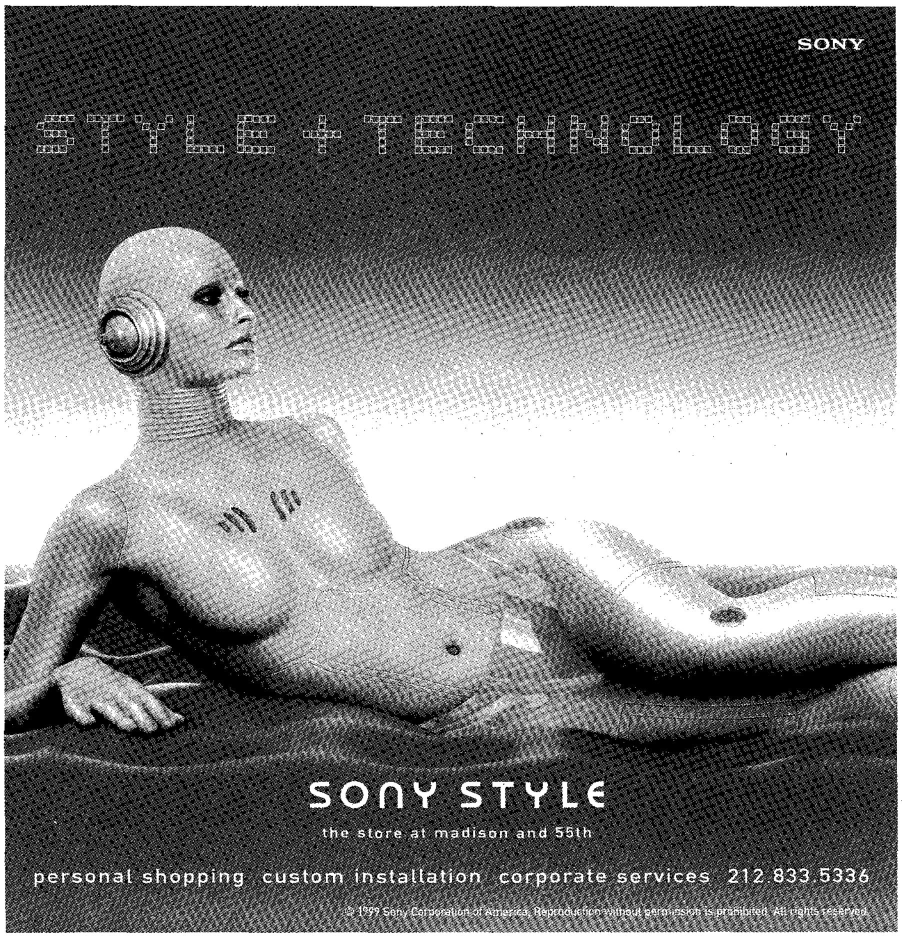
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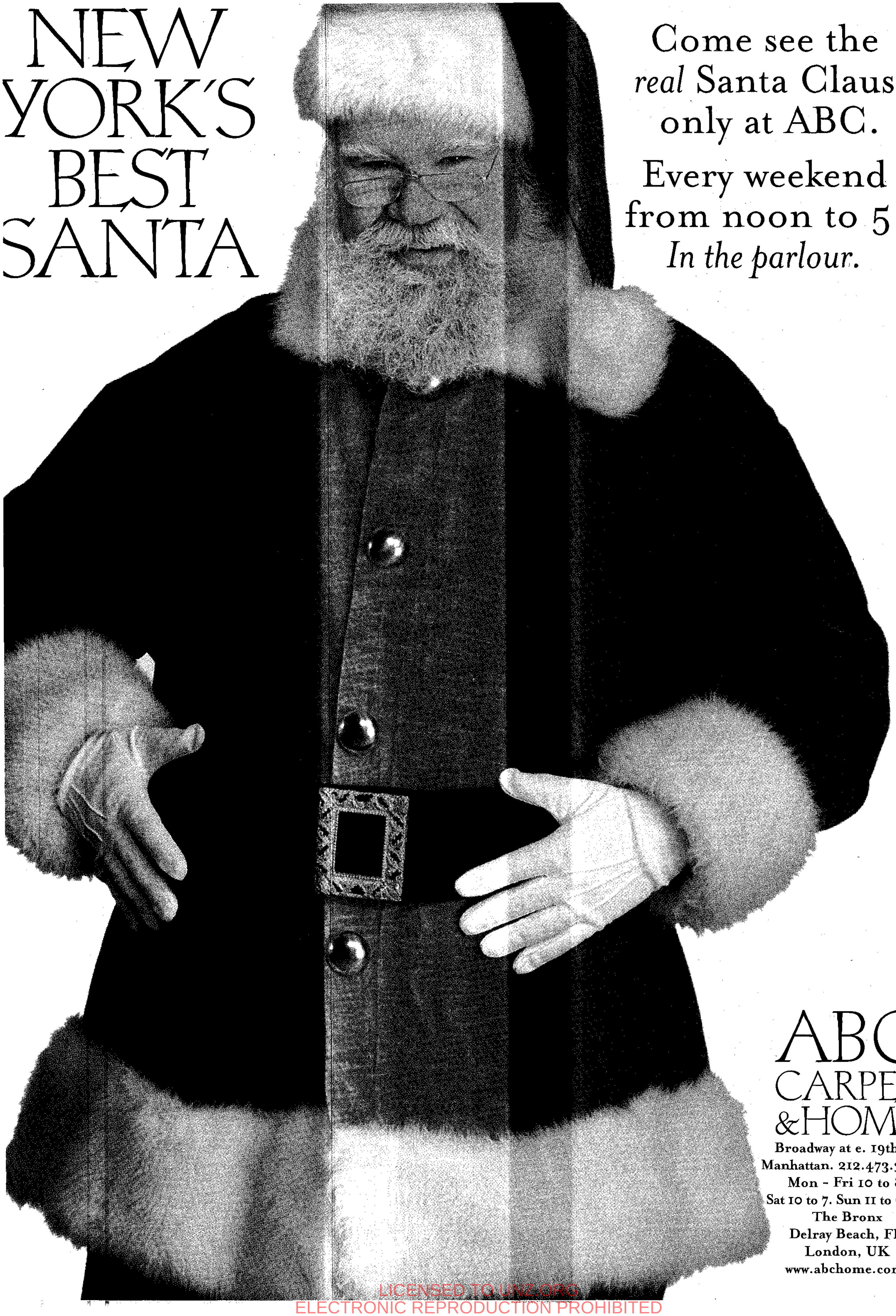

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Disco Inferno

The unintended consequences of Rudy's nightlife war; GHB defended; Bell Atlantic's communication breakdown; looks aren't everything.

THE GIULIANI ADMINISTRATION HAS taken the Dinkins-era Social Club Task Force, formed after the Happy Land tragedy for the sole purpose of closing illegal, unsafe, and unlicensed establishments, and turned it into a weapon to stop dancing and other such minor violations at safe, licensed venues ["Nightclub Limbo," by Alec Foege, November 22]. The result is that while many of my legitimate nightlife clients suffer harassment summonses for activities such as "eight people gyrating to music," "cutting lemons without gloves," and a security guard's "sitting on a stool near a fire exit," dozens of after-hours clubs thrive without liquor, cabaret, or Health Department licenses and without sprinkler systems or fire alarms. The harder the mayor makes it for legitimate businesses to operate, the more underground clubs are encouraged to open.

Robert S. Bookman
MANHATTAN

Disco Daze

I CAME AWAY FROM YOUR NIGHTLIFE ISSUE feeling sorry for most of the current club denizens ["Wild, Wild Week," November 22]. They seem to be a rootless, soulless, drug-obsessed group who do not connect with the sheer joy of the club-and-music experience as I knew it. But back then, the music had words instead of a monotonous, ultimately annoying beat that almost demands an altered state of consciousness. I hope I live another 30 years so I can read about what today's generation will be complaining about when they reach my age and wax nostalgic about their club days.

Dan Morin
WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.

Legalize It?

I AM ANGERED BY THE NEGATIVE ATTENTION GHB constantly receives ["Clear and Present Danger," by Ethan Brown, November 22]. Condemnation of GHB/GBL and attempts to make it illegal inevitably make it more desirable; what's needed is a stronger effort to educate clubgoers. From a public-health standpoint, it would be wiser for the FDA to create standard regulations for GHB and ecstasy (to avoid basement labs' bogus concoctions) than to attack the drugs as being hazardous. *New York* Magazine, start crusading against alcohol and cigarettes if you want to make a socially conscious statement about drugs in partyland.

Rico Caselli
MANHATTAN

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Broadly Speaking

CLIVE THOMPSON'S PARK SLOPE FRIEND HAD it easy ["Cityscape: Strike Up the Bandwidth," November 22]. I called Flashcom on June 7 and wasn't up and running until October 4. Bell Atlantic skipped scheduled appointments repeatedly, then installed the lines improperly when someone did show up. I had to get and return my patient neighbor's keys for access to the phone box in his backyard six times over a four-month period. I waited with the Covad technician so often while Bell Atlantic stood us up that we got to be fast friends. In all fairness, Flashcom worked hard to make amends. And the high-speed access is great. But be prepared for a major saga, and keep your dial-up modem for backup.

Roberta Kahn
BROOKLYN

AS THE DIRECTOR OF A NEW OFFICE OF A large architectural firm with multiple offices around the country, I read "Strike Up the Bandwidth" with a combination of rage and glee at the outing of Bell Atlantic's gross disservice to the New York business community and the general public. I ordered a DSL under the gushing promises of a private service provider only to uncover a nasty web of lies, deceit, ineptitude, and disinterest on the part of Bell Atlantic. Their spin on the situation—comparing this debacle to a road-show test for a Broadway musical—disgusted me. What show tune are they humming? This is about infrastructure, not entertainment. Our firm spent 150 hours attempting to solve our Internet woes dealing with Bell Atlantic's listless, surly employees. Interestingly enough, during this four-month battle, I spoke incognito with Bell Atlantic's new DSL sales force, which promised a speedy three-week delivery. Something stinks.

Ben Wauford
MANHATTAN

I'M A 75-YEAR-OLD COMPUTER-LITERATE who surfs the Net daily, and am called hip by my grandchildren because I correspond with them regularly by e-mail. As a resident of Stuyvesant Town, I have had instantaneous access to the Net for the past several months through RCN. Strange that a company that has done a tremendous amount of television and other media advertising in New York wasn't mentioned in an article about the difficulties in obtaining high-speed Internet access. RCN has been right up to the minute in all its services, and Bell Atlantic, which did the installation for them of my telephone-service lines, was both punctual and accommodating.

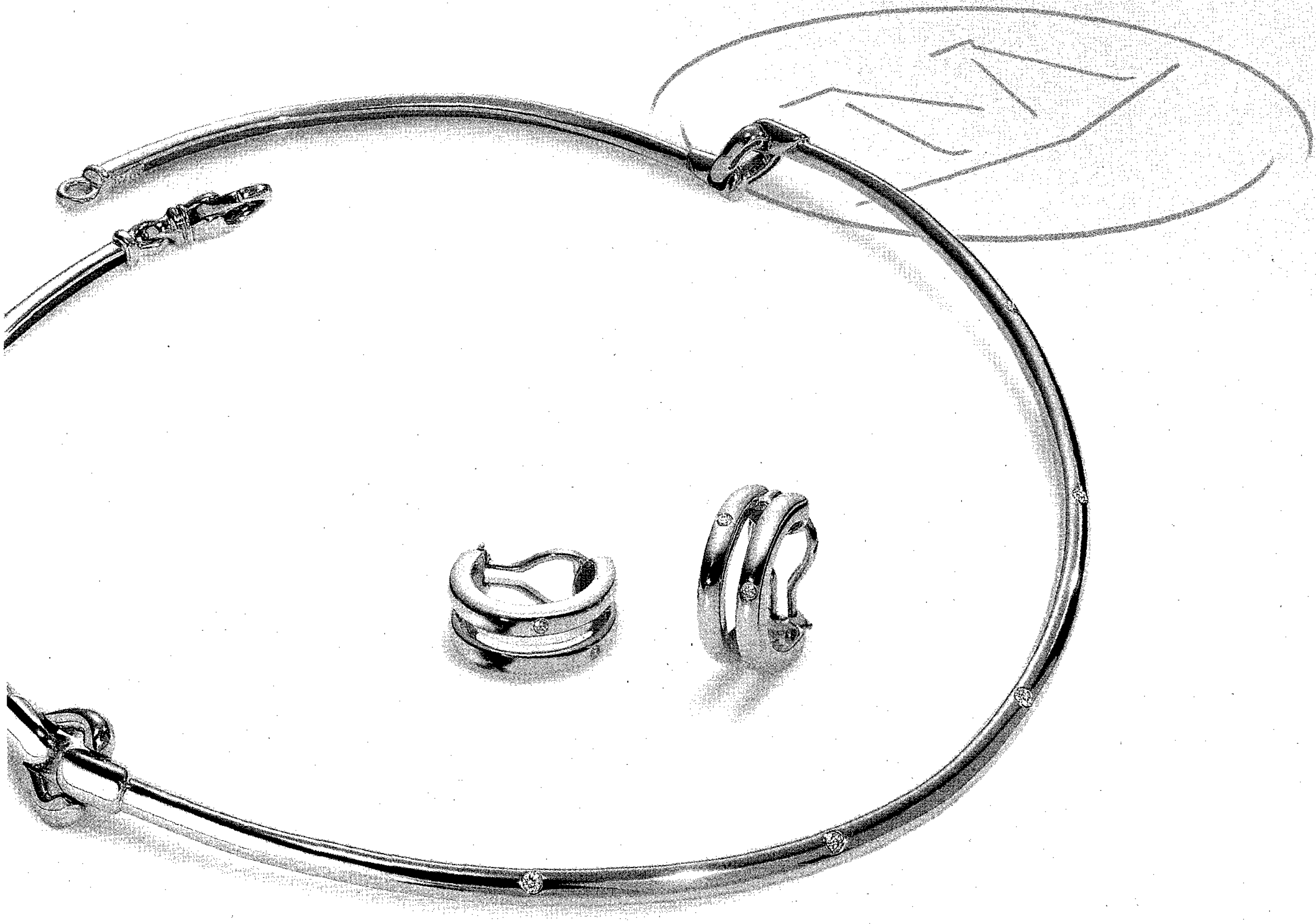
Mort Braverman
MANHATTAN

Critic Critique

IN HIS NOVEMBER 15 REVIEW OF *AN EXPERIMENT WITH AN AIR PUMP* ["Theater: Know-Brainers"], John Simon refers to my performance as good, "if you don't mind her looks of an anorectic Bette Midler." Thank you for your concern, Mr. Simon, but I don't feel I need you to warn potential theatergoers that you happen to find me less than attractive. The role I am currently playing does not call for an actress of any particular appearance, nor does your review go on to explain in what way my looks diminished your experience of the character. Your gratuitous comment, however, did make me wonder about you. Do you hope to be remembered as a serious theater critic or as a schoolyard bully who continually engaged in name-calling with actresses?

Clea Lewis
MANHATTAN

LINES OF L'ATTITUDE



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BY BETH LANDMAN KEIL AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

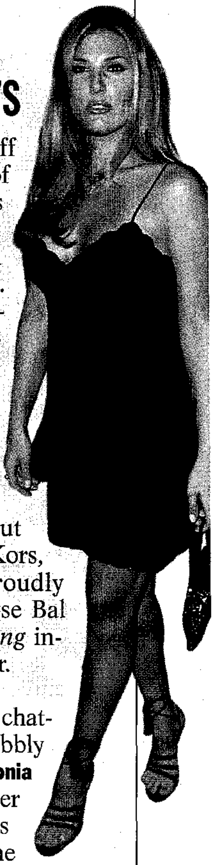
INTELLIGENCER

PETER VALLONE'S PARTY TRICKS

Even when **Peter Vallone** is celebrating his birthday, politics is foremost on his mind. When the City Council Speaker approached council members to invite them to his 65th-birthday party, featuring a performance by longtime pal **Tony Bennett**, and asked if he could list their names on his invitation, many were delighted. But when the invitation was placed in City Hall mailboxes last week, some of the politicos were surprised to discover that Vallone was using the event to raise money for his 2001 mayoral race. "We felt snookered," says a staff member for one of the invitees. When Councilman **Kenneth Fisher**—who is *also* running for mayor—was personally handed a reply card from the Speaker, he politely accepted, even though the VALLONE 2001 logo hinted that it was more than just a birthday party. The next day, he called Vallone's staff to decline and asked that he not be listed as an "honorary host" on the formal invitation. Yet Vallone's people listed him anyway. "My name on there is a mistake. I went to Vallone's staff asking to be taken off the list because I didn't think it would be in my interest politically," says Fisher. **Adam Macy**, spokesperson for Vallone 2001, angrily disputes the alleged sucker punch: "It has long been known that this event would be a fund-raiser as well as a celebration of the speaker's 65th birthday. For anyone to believe otherwise is absurd."

Woody Harrelson: Knot a bad guy

ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT SILVER'S

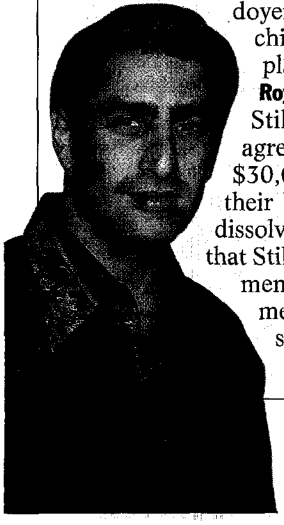


Actor **Ron Silver** can certainly charm the pants off the ladies. At a recent party for the opening of Céline's new boutique in Bal Harbour, store reps repeatedly tried to get **Daisy Fuentes**, the shapely former host of MTV's *House of Style*, to model some new outfits by house designer **Michael Kors**. But Fuentes clearly didn't feel like playing dress-up that evening. Casually sporting a less-than-stylish T-shirt-and-sarong ensemble, the ex-V.J. resisted the staff's requests. Silver, overhearing the exchange, jumped in and, after some initial spurning from Fuentes, managed to convince her to change into a striking coral skirt and bejeweled black top by claiming he was thinking of buying it for his girlfriend. Daisy filled out the outfit so well that when she was spotted by Kors, he gave her the $5,000 threads, which she proudly wore to the after-party at the new Beach House Bal Harbour hotel. Apparently Silver was just *acting* interested—he left Céline without the pricey wear.

WOODY TIE A STRANGER'S SHOE?

It pays to be with **Woody Harrelson** when you're fit to be tied. The actor was recently spotted on a subway train chatting with his bubbly Irish assistant, **Sonia Farrell**, who had her arms full of papers and packages. The *Rainmaker* star, wearing a backpack and a little wool hat, noticed that one of Farrell's shoes was untied and promptly assisted his assistant by bending down and tying the lace. "I'm sure she was carrying his organic food, so he went down and did the deed so she wouldn't drop his soy," quips Harrelson rep **Simon Halls** of the health-conscious actor. Wonder what he does for his cook.

JEFFREY JAH'S HARD-KNOCK LIFE



Life has been pretty good for club master **Jeffrey Jah** (pictured) lately—except, that is, when it comes to Life. The downtown doyen, who was the club's chief promoter, says he plans on suing the owner, **Roy Stillman**, claiming that Stillman reneged on an agreement to pay him $30,000 in severance when their business contracts were dissolved in August. Jah opines that Stillman balked on the payments because he "blames me for the New York *Post* story 'Life Sucks' and everything else wrong with the club." Not surprisingly, Stillman tells a different story. He says a "gentleman's agreement" *was* made to pay Jah about $6,500—but only after Jah threatened to "spread scandalous rumors about Life." The payments stopped at $3,900, Stillman says, because he heard that Jah had lashed out against Life to one of the club's talent coordinators. "If this case really comes out," snipes Stillman, Jah "will be immediately sued by me." Stillman claims that Jah's "ego is just destroyed since leaving my business," and with no written contract, Jah "has no chance of winning in court." Jah's reply? "I told him I'm suing, and that's what I'm doing."

REBUILDING THE BROKEN CENTER

Lincoln Center's proposed face-lift is being handled with the secrecy usually accorded to Hollywood actresses in for a quick nip and tuck. The report on the ag-

Photographs: clockwise from top, Gregory Pace/Corbis Sygma; Fitzroy Barrett/Globe Photos; Robin Platzer/Twin Images.

BOHNER'S A GONER FROM THE COFFEE BIZ

Kate Bohner's turn as a consultant for Foster Brothers Coffee has left everyone involved with a bitter aftertaste. Famous as **Donald Trump**'s co-author on the best-selling *Art of the Comeback*—and reportedly the model for Samantha in *Sex and the City*—Bohner met **Kent Foster** over the summer. He offered her $10,000 a month to analyze how to develop his coffee-shop chain in Chicago and Washington, D.C., which he'd bought three and a half years before. But their relationship quickly soured. "We felt she didn't spend a lot of time evaluating our company, and what she told us we already knew," reports one of Foster's lieutenants, who says they were expecting weekly reports over two months but only got three. "The fourth one never came," says the lieutenant, adding, "We never got our cell phone back either." Bohner insists she did send the fourth report, and her assistant claims she mailed the phone back herself. "We never received it," insists Foster, "and we finally had to cut it off with AT&T." Bohner's friends make her Foster connection sound like a *Sex and the City* episode. "Kent had a crush on Kate," reports a Bohner buddy, "and he got pouty when things didn't go as he hoped." Foster says he's never had a crush on the leggy writer, even though they're both single. Bohner, who says, "I worked my butt off," calls the situation "unbelievably awkward" and "very unpalatable." Foster says he's "thinking about" a lawsuit. Can't they both just wake up and smell the coffee?

ing arts center, prepared by **Roy Furman**'s Committee for the 21st Century, is being presented to the full board of Lincoln Center at its meeting this Monday. Before then, even board members of such concerned parties as the Metropolitan Opera and the New York City Ballet were not given the final report. But the word is that the cost of the proposed renovations is up to a whopping $1.5 billion. The Metropolitan Opera is eager to take over at least 25 feet of the central plaza in order to expand its lobby. And there has been talk of expanding the New York State Theatre back toward 62nd Street, perhaps taking over some of the wide sidewalk or building a bridge like the one that currently exists over 66th Street. Lincoln Center's spokeswoman, **Janice Price**, refuses to confirm any of the speculation about what's in the report. "We can't comment publicly before our own board has even seen it," she says. She sounds ready to handle **Sophia Loren** next.

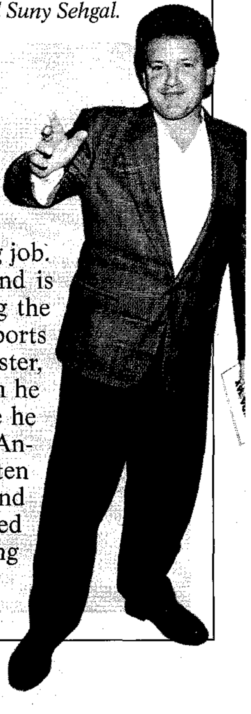
BERNIE'S VISION JOY; *BOSSA NOVA* BOY

PERFECT SIGHT LINES: Looks like **Bernie Williams** has taken a gamble—one that may pay off big-time. The Yankees star got laser eye surgery on November 26. His doctor, **Ken Moadel**, explains that the ace outfielder and .342 hitter was nearsighted and had an astigmatism; the contact lenses he wore while playing were uncomfortable and made him blink. That's why he switched to glasses when he left the ballpark. Moadel points out that the legendary **Ted Williams** had 20/10 vision. "Sure enough," reports Moadel, "the day after the surgery, [Bernie's] vision was better than 20/20 in each eye without glasses on. Now he'll be able to see the rotation of the ball earlier, and hopefully add more than a few points to his batting average." Not bad for a ten-minute operation that's still considered controversial by many. Maybe it's time for **Barbra Streisand** to reconsider that nose job.

COURTING BIG BUCKS: What happens when a writer gets the travel bug? If you're **Coerte Felske**, you give your novel the flavor of Brazil and start angling for an advance that's generous enough to get you there. The *Millennium Girl* scribe is currently writing novel No. 4, which he's calling *Bossa Nova Diaries*. The word in publishing circles is that Felske's agent, William Morris's **Owen Laster**, is looking for a big advance to finance some South American research—even if it means jumping ship from Felske's regular publisher, St. Martin's. But Laster insists that he hasn't yet shopped the proposal around. "Right now, I'm only talking to his publisher," says the agent. "I can't say whether we're going to make a deal."

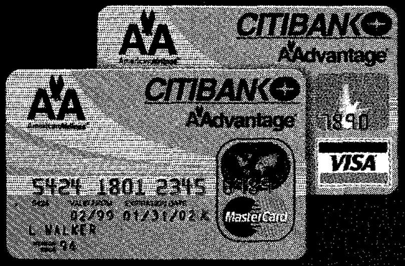
Additional reporting by David Amsden and Suny Sehgal.

ROGER BOMBS AS A CASTING AGENT



Wannabe rock star **Roger Clinton** most often plays the role of First Brother for laughs. But he found himself starring in a farce earlier this year, when he was at a Hollywood dinner with director **Peter Antonijevic** while his half-brother **Bill** was spearheading NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia. The younger Clinton asked the Serbian director for an acting job. Antonijevic, who directed **Dennis Quaid** in the well-received *Savior* and is now remaking *The Night of the Iguana*, had been imprisoned during the early days of **Slobodan Milosevic**'s reign. "He doesn't like Milosevic," reports a source, "but he didn't like the Americans' bombing his mother and sister, either." Today, the director laughs about his dinner with Roger, whom he calls "not an unpleasant guy. He's sweet, but I was laughing, because he was the only person in America who really *couldn't* ask" for a role. Antonijevic still questions U.S. policy in his homeland—his mother often suffers without electricity or heat, whereas "Milosevic is well fed and drinks scotch," the director grouses. Roger Clinton could not be reached for comment: He's on tour in North Korea till December 10, proving once again that he didn't inherit his Big Brother's political acumen.

Photographs: top, Gregory Pace/Corbis Sygma; bottom, Lisa Rose/Globe Photos.



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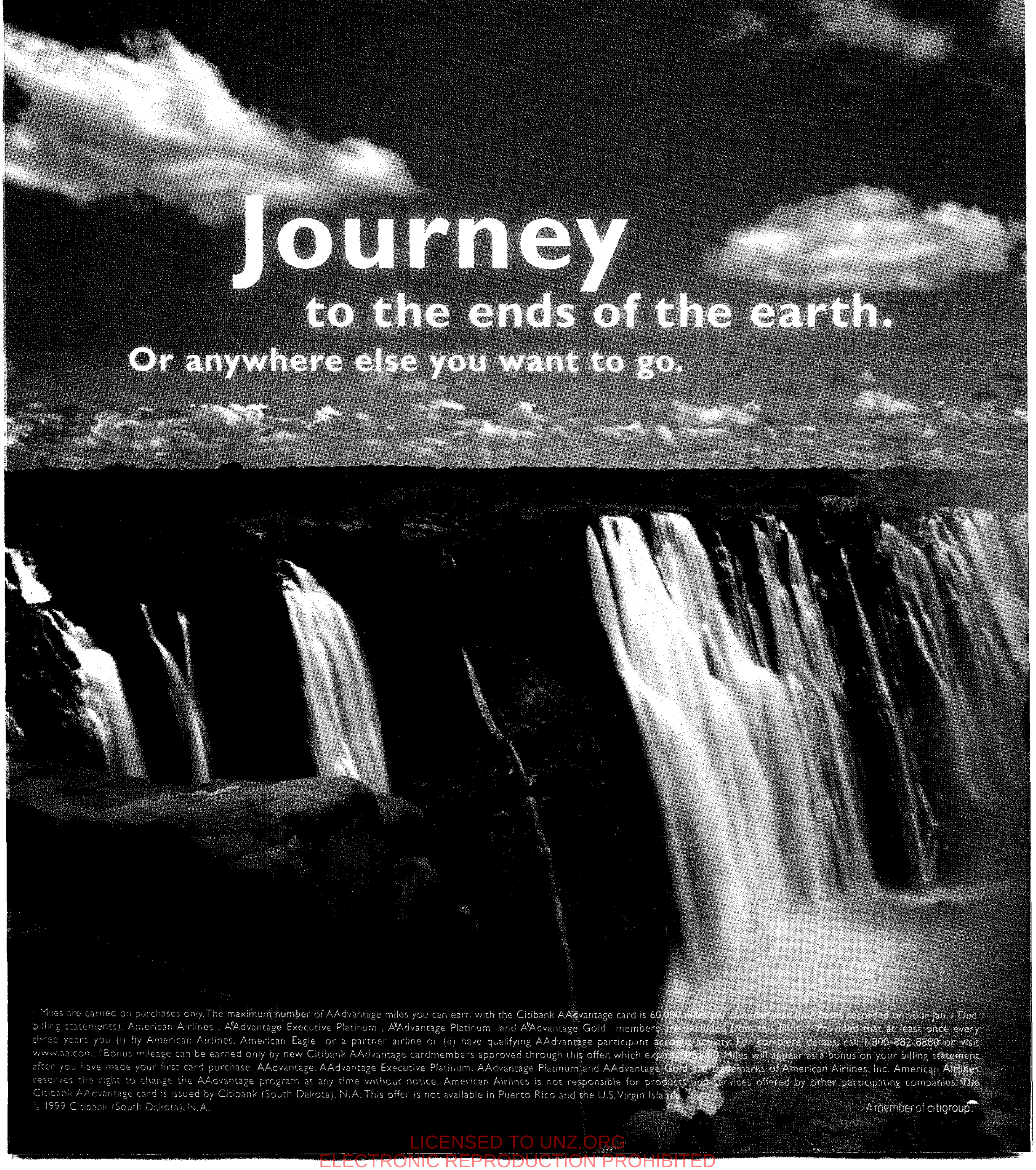

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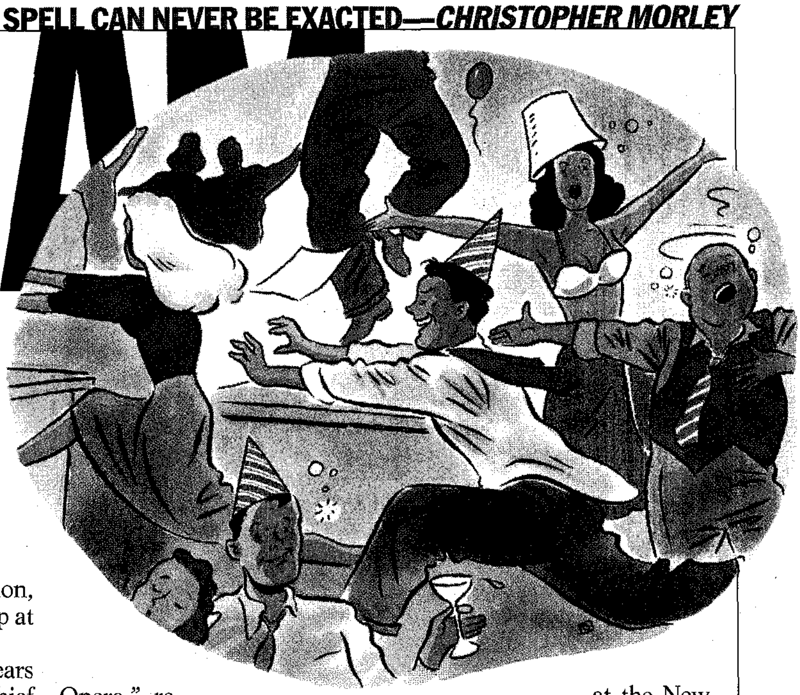


Yule Be Sorry

Which office has the wildest holiday party?

OVERBOOKED CALENDARS, unprecedented credit-card debt, egg-nog dry-cleaning bills—for the urban professional, the holiday season is fraught with perils. But perhaps none is so fearsome as that abyss of temptation and vice, the annual office holiday party. Whether the setting is a dusty corporate ballroom or a meatpacking-district nightclub, the combination of free booze, overworked nerves, and unexplored flirtations guarantees an evening worthy of sexual-harassment proceedings, an Al-Anon intervention, or at least a mortifying recap at the water cooler.

"There was one party, years ago, when the editor-in-chief ended up in the bathroom with a young staffer," recalls a men's-magazine editor. Precautions were taken against a similar occurrence when an advertising agency known for its automobile accounts held court at a Latin dance club. "They had to guard the CEO from making an ass out of himself," says a media planner. "At an earlier party, he had sex with a secretary."

It's not always management stirring up trouble. "At Coco Opera," remembers another ad executive, "a friend of mine dirty-danced with the CEO but didn't even remember. They hadn't been introduced before, and he was all over her." "We lit up a joint," confesses a media writer of a recent holiday soirée. "The security guard threw ten of us out of our own Christmas party." A prominent gym chain's event devolved into a debauched scene of trainers drinking and taking bong hits. "The elevator was broken," recalls a reveler, "and everyone was bitching about having to climb the stairs."

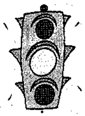
A former Balthazar bartender says he heard that punches were thrown after a few too many vodka shots at a Yuletide fête Keith McNally held for his staff at Pravda. Even a goodwill game of Secret Santa can get dicey: At *Time Out New York,* a fight almost broke out when one gentleman presented a male colleague with a chocolate penis. And after a Condé Nast magazine's party at the SoHo Grand, "one guy peed on the red carpet," recalls a co-worker. "Right out in front of everybody." At a film company, says one employee, "someone always vomits and has to get carried out."

Some parties, of course, are as G-rated as you'd expect. "We just stood around eating cheese," recalls a former editor at the New York *Times.* "Then a ripple went through the crowd. Everyone was like, '*Ooooh.* Max Frankel's here!' "

Instead of letting guests get peacefully pickled, some companies turn the attendees into the entertainment. At Corcoran's bash last year at Chelsea Piers, black-tie guests were treated to a musical in which brokers masqueraded as desperate families going in front of a co-op board. At the Manhattan district attorney's office, rookie assistant D.A.'s must perform sketches based on recent cases. Last year, "one guy was dressed up in a blonde wig and falsies," recalls a colleague.

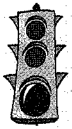
At Martha Stewart's company, cross-dressing isn't on the to-do list. Last year, after being greeted with a wall of pine trees, employees were plied with salmon from Russ & Daughters and tarts from City Bakery. Corporate beneficence, however, can backfire. When Rupert Murdoch threw an extravaganza on the *Intrepid,* employees focused on the price tag instead. "That marching band earned more than my salary!" grouses one former staff member. "I was walking around hoarding lady apples and hunks of cheese in my pockets," remembers another. "But I ended up puking it all up on my bed." SARAH BERNARD

Campaign-Trail Traffic Report



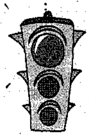
Conservative Party chieftain Mike Long's threat to withhold endorsement threatens to be gigantor vote drain—but Rudy gets points for holding partial-birth line.

New Sheehy bio sparks feud. Was distant dad Hugh present at Li'l Hill's commencement? Did she toke? But what was she doing working for future Nixon Defense secretary Melvin Laird?!



***Yee-hah!* Dubbuyuh comes through for the Yankee mayor, lining up Texas money, saying he'll help with the Conservatives. Cut above pointless summer Arkansas trip.**

Attack on Giuliani's new arrest-the-homeless policy wows audience, has bite, makes page A1 of the *Times.* Now *that's* a candidate!



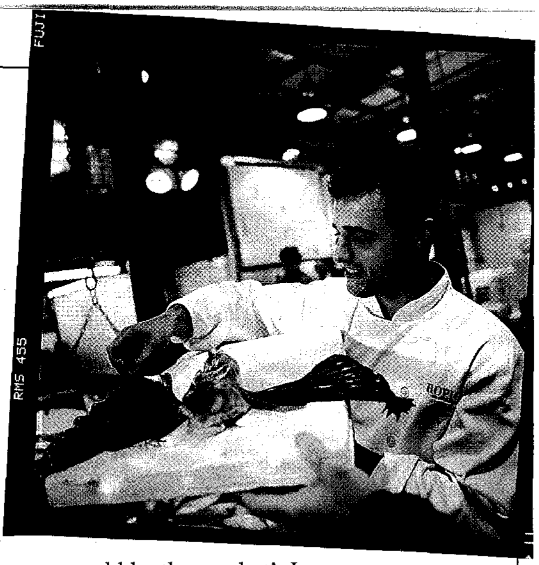
Ex–Buildings Department official implicates administration—and campaign manager Bruce Teitelbaum—in deadly Williamsburg building collapse. Hey, Joe Trivisonno, watch what you say over your phone line!

But why attend fund-raiser for pro-life Queens Dem while three pro-choicers toy with running against him? We know she doesn't have a primary, but is she against *all* primaries?

Illustrations: top, A. J. Garces; bottom, Ingo Fast (3).
Photographs: left, Frances M. Roberts; right, Richard B. Levine.

Gone Fishing

Some won't mourn the end of the Fulton Fish Market.



THE FLYING GURNARD (*DACTYLOPTERUS volitans*) looks about as much like a pterodactyl as a sea creature can—huge splayed fins, fierce visage, oddly armored head. Even at the Fulton Fish Market, Manhattan's fabled Ellis Island for ocean life, it takes a reference book to I.D. the thing. "I've never seen one before," marvels vendor David Samuels, whose Blue Ribbon Fish Company has hung its shingle at Fulton for four generations. "Would *you* buy it?"

They'll buy anything here, of course—"I like the race to see who comes in first to get the best stone crab," says Franck Deletrain (pictured), executive chef at Tropica, who is trying to track down a Chilean elephant fish at 4:30 A.M—but not, perhaps, for much longer. Last month, the city announced it was considering moving the market to Hunts Point in the Bronx to comply with new federal food-storage mandates. Fulton has famously resisted relocation plans before; at least one source in the market's leadership puts the odds of the Hunts Point move at only 50-50. But technically, the market could go anywhere: It's been decades since the truck-based market actually used the East River to get its fish. As the rest of lower Manhattan goes digital and residential, the 178-year-old nocturnal world of burly men unloading trucks, riding forklifts, and dumping ice on crates suddenly seems more fleeting and mystical than ever. "I describe it as *Brigadoon,*" says Rick Moonen, executive chef at Oceana.

In the past five decades, Fulton has grown beyond its quaint Joseph Mitchell–chronicled era to move $1 billion in fish each year. But the selling of fish on consignment is in serious decline: Direct fish auctions in Maine and Massachusetts now let fishermen unload their catch at a premium, displacing middlemen like the Fulton market. This new vulnerability, combined with Fulton's ever-crumbling physical plant, has convinced some that the time is right to ship out. "It's our home," says Dino Fiorentino, 22, who grew up at his father's fish stand. "But we've got a big electrical problem. If we move, we'll save a lot of money."

Still, the biggest argument for relocation could be the market's Jurassic culture. "It turns my stomach," Moonen says. "Guys with cigars in their mouths and hooks in their hands, dragging fish around the ground. I don't want to scare people, but more regulation really *is* needed." The federal rules call for fish to be sold in enclosed, refrigerated spaces; only the most nostalgic would deny that such change is long overdue. "Right now, everything is on ice and I don't think it's a problem," says Deletrain. "But in July and August, it's completely different."

Of course, this being Fulton, only one dealer sells ice, and no one remembers the last time anyone competed. Like the flying gurnard, some traditions here seem downright prehistoric. ROBERT KOLKER

Twenty Questions

No one's invited to Miramax's birthday.

MIRAMAX FILMS HAS NEVER BEEN A COMPANY TO SHY AWAY from publicity. So on the occasion of this year's twentieth anniversary, you'd expect the Hollywood trade papers—which deliriously print special sections celebrating anything from Milton Berle's 90th birthday to DirecTV's fifth—to assign the de rigueur retrospective on Harvey and Bob Weinstein's extraordinary two-decade run. But neither the *Hollywood Reporter* nor *Variety* has touched upon the subject.

"We haven't done a story," says Peter Bart, *Variety*'s editorial director, "because a twentieth birthday is not necessarily news"—though this year *Variety* devoted nine pages to CNBC's tenth anniversary and eleven to *3rd Rock from the Sun*'s one-hundredth episode. A Miramax spokesman offers another explanation: "No one's done a story on our twentieth birthday because we're not going to cooperate on any of those stories. We want the focus to be on the films." Without that cooperation, the trades won't get the congratulatory ads from others in the industry that fatten special sections.

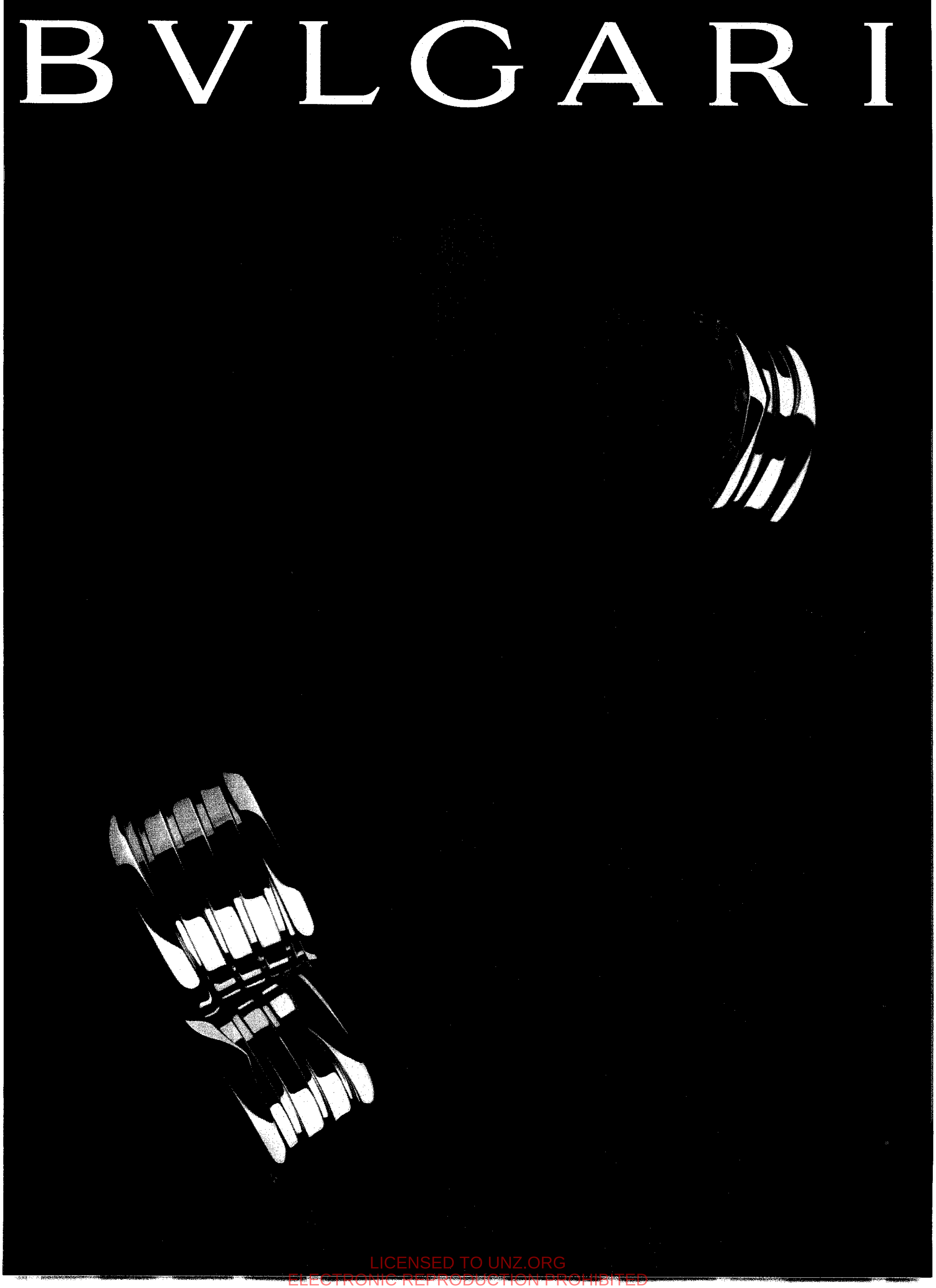
The company that turned Hollywood upside down with hits like *The Crying Game, Pulp Fiction,* and *Shakespeare in Love* discourages discussion of its less glamorous early years, when Harvey Weinstein was promoting Frank Sinatra concerts in Buffalo with then-partner Horace Burger. (The Buffalo *News* reported in 1997 that Burger owned a piece of Miramax before a contentious buyout.) "At Miramax, they don't like to count the first ten years, before *sex, lies & videotape,*" says Bart.

Eighteen months ago, British author Angus Finney signed with Random House imprint William Heinemann to do a history of the company. But six months ago, Finney took a job at Renaissance Films, a U.K. production company whose last released film was *The Wings of the Dove,* a 1997 Miramax co-production. Now, Finney says, the Miramax book has been canceled. "I'm simply too busy making films to write books," he explains, adding that the Weinsteins "in no way tried to block me from writing the book."

Finney's exit paves the way for Peter Biskind, author of *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls: How the Sex-Drugs-and-Rock-'n'-Roll Generation Saved Hollywood.* Biskind just signed with Simon & Schuster to do a book on the American independent-film scene after *sex, lies & videotape.* He says that his book will not be about just the Weinsteins. "It's one of those books that you discover as you go along," he says, adding carefully, "this subject is a very sensitive area for Miramax."

But now comes word that next summer, the full Miramax story will finally be published by none other than Talk Miramax books. And the authors? Harvey and Bob Weinstein. ROSS JOHNSON

Disney stocks: A tale of the tapes 5
VARIETY
THE REPORTER
Hail William the conqueror
ENCH KISS


BVLGARI

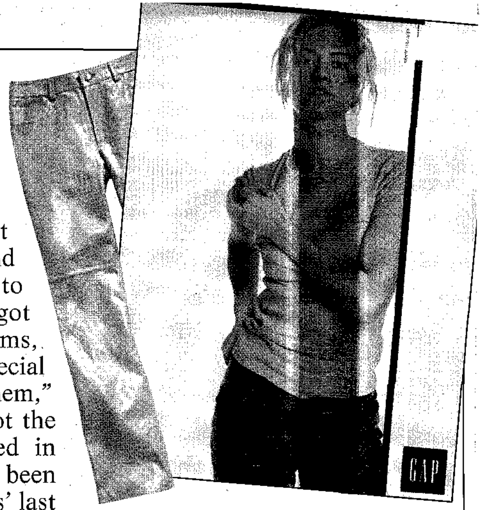
Hide and Seek

Just try to get your hands on those Gap pants.

‘EVERYBODY IN LEATHER,” COMMANDED THE GAP’S AD CAMPAIGN, and consumers from Oswego to Orlando followed the orders. The new line hit Gap stores around Labor Day, and within weeks, customers had stripped shelves of the most coveted item—the flatteringly hip-hugging women’s boot-cut black leather jeans, a steal at $175.

Even fashion editors, who can have designer leather goods delivered at the snap of their fingers, found themselves at a loss. When the Gap sent out an early editorial mailing of fall items, those who didn’t receive the pants got on the horn immediately, and the Gap P.R. department’s editorial wait list is at an unprecedented length. Now only a few lonely pairs of size 16s remain on the racks. “Every day, someone asks me about those jeans,” sighs a saleswoman at the lower–Fifth Avenue store. “We’re losing a lot of sales by not having them,” her manager agrees. Customers who ransacked the city and came up empty-handed were told a new shipment would arrive at the beginning of November, and then at the end of that month; now the date has been pushed back to mid-January. “Those things are never gonna arrive,” predicts a clerk at the checkout counter.

“The woman at the Gap on Sixth Avenue and 46th Street told me that the leather pants keep getting stolen off the trucks,” says Brian Feuer, a hedge-fund manager who was trying to score a pair in size 2 for a female friend. “There’s apparently some black market for them and they don’t even make it to the stores.” He eventually located a pair at a Japanese shop and had them shipped to New York. “They got held up in Customs, and I had to take special insurance out on them,” he says. Feuer is not the only man interested in the jeans; guys have been buying up the stores’ last few pairs in larger women’s sizes—for themselves.



After hunting through Gaps in New York and L.A., publicist Marni Salup located the jeans through a French pal in Paris. Fashion publicist Lara Shriftman dispatched her 12-year-old brother to find them in Jacksonville, Florida. “I was obsessed with them,” she admits. “There’s a long waiting list at the Beverly Drive store, and I put my name on that. I was sure they’d have them in Florida, but no luck.” Her brother located a pair on the Gap’s Website. Soon enough, the online pool dried up, too—the only leather jeans available online now come in unappealing “ivory.”

“This is an unusual situation,” says a Gap spokeswoman. “We knew the pants were awesome—*in fact, I’m wearing them right now*—but we underestimated customer reaction. But honestly, they should be in any day now.” A visit to a midtown Gap confirms that a couple of pairs *have* arrived . . . in hot pink and tan.

BETH LANDMAN KEIL

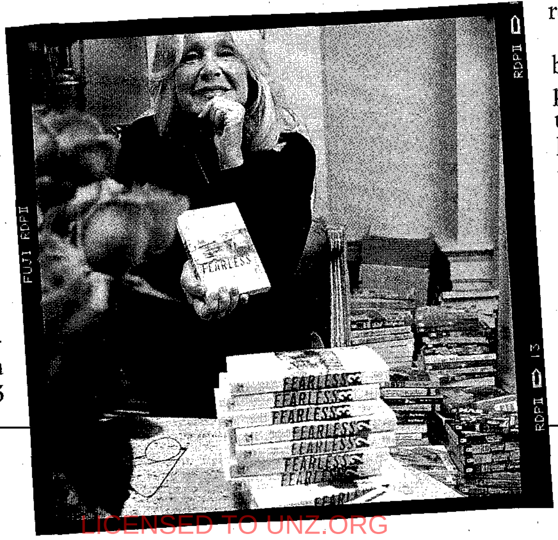
Move Over, Buffy

Francine Pascal’s latest teen-book heroine is no ‘Valley’ girl.

ANY WOMAN WHO WAS A TEENAGER IN 1983 or after can tell you who lived in Sweet Valley: Jessica and Elizabeth Wakefield, identical twins with shoulder-length blonde hair, blue-green eyes, and perfect size-6 figures. The only way to tell them apart? Elizabeth, the good one, always wore a watch—Jessica, the Alexis Carrington character, didn’t need one, because “nothing really ever started until she got there.”

Oh, how times have changed. This fall, *Sweet Valley High* author Francine Pascal has unveiled a new, far grittier Generation Y series, *Fearless,* the story of a girl born without the gene for fear. Pocket Books is rolling out one book per month in stores and through the hot teen magalogue Alloy, and a TV series in development will go up against *Buffy the Vampire Slayer.*

Fearless, which hit No. 1 on Barnes and Noble’s young-adult list, stars Gaia, who lives on Perry Street, has a crush on an NYU hottie, uses PG-13 language like “bitch” and “shit,” and attends “Greenwich Village High” when she’s not kicking a lot of bad-guy ass. “The good thing about seventeen,” narrates Gaia, “is that you’re not sixteen. Sixteen goes with the word *sweet,* and I am so far from sweet. I’ve got a black belt in kung fu and I’m trained in karate, judo, jujitsu, and *muay thai*—which is basically kick boxing.”



“Gaia is strong, and that’s the way girls are these days—like Buffy, who I think is terrific,” says the sixtyish Pascal, pushing her Loni Anderson bangs out of her eyes in the Louis XVI sitting room of her West Fifties apartment. It’s the home of an obviously successful author (or rather “creator,” since Pascal has a staff of writers who crank out *Sweet Valleys* from her outlines). “In high school, I *was* Gaia,” says Pascal, a lifelong New Yorker and author of several adult books who grew up in Washington Heights and Queens before graduating from NYU. “But I always wished I had had the life of the Wakefield girls. There is something in the twins that just makes every woman in the world relate to *Sweet Valley.*”

In 1985, it was the first young-adult book to make the New York *Times* paperback best-seller list—No. 14, right under John Updike and Norman Mailer. The series now comprises 700 volumes. There are 150 million copies in print worldwide, in 25 languages, and two U.S. television series in reruns.

“We’ll see how *Fearless* performs over time—the market for teen book series is saturated at the moment,” says Pascal. “Of course,” she adds with a soft laugh, “I’m the one who saturated it.” VANESSA GRIGORIADIS

Photograph by Brennan Cavanaugh.

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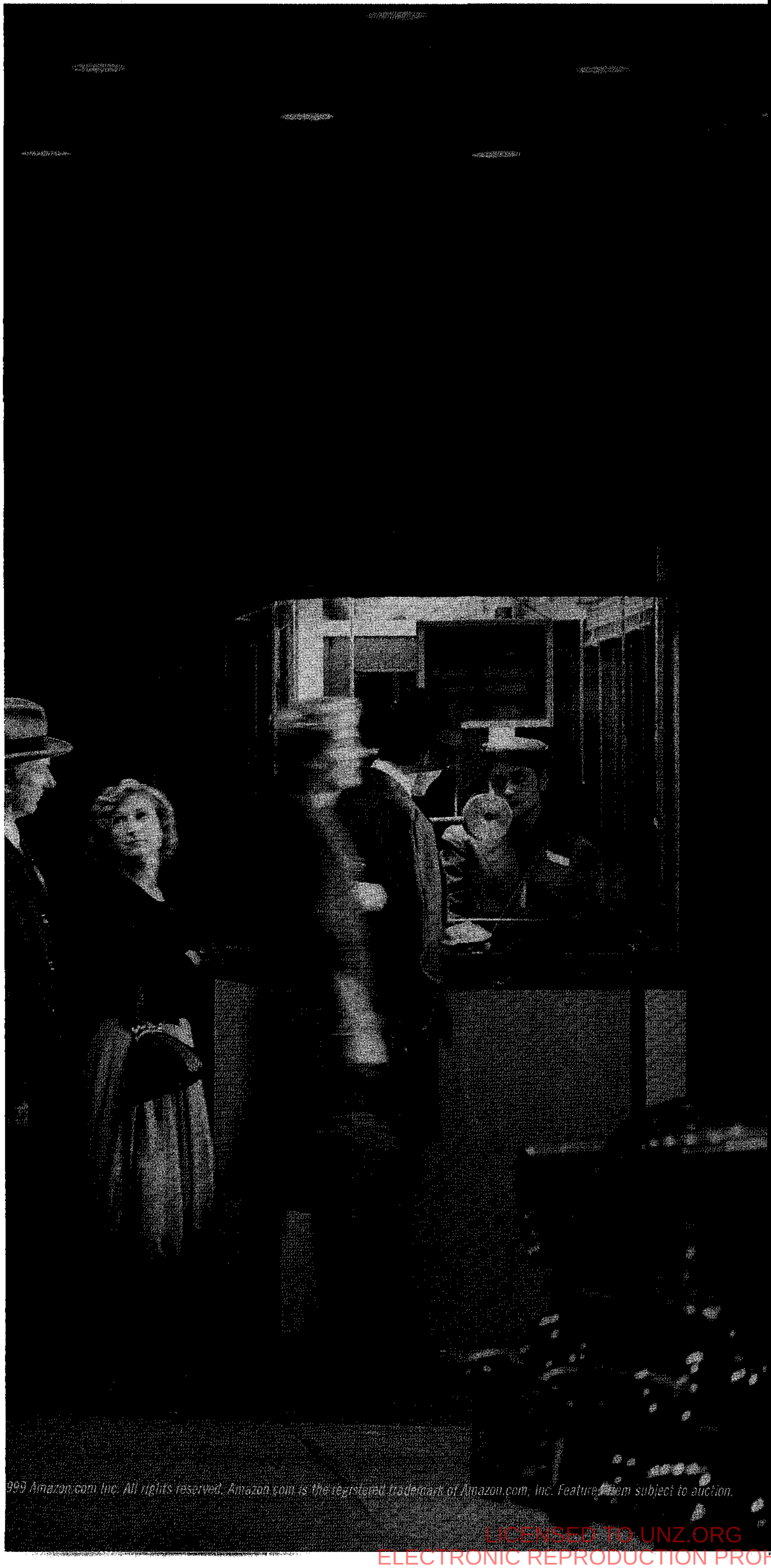

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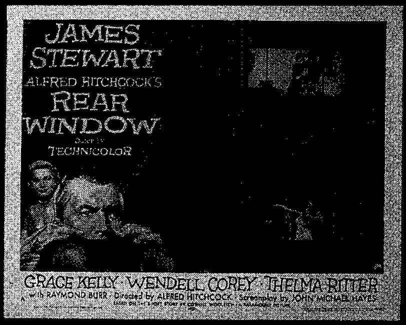
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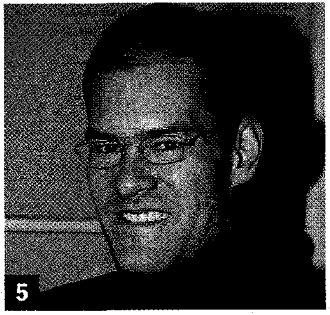
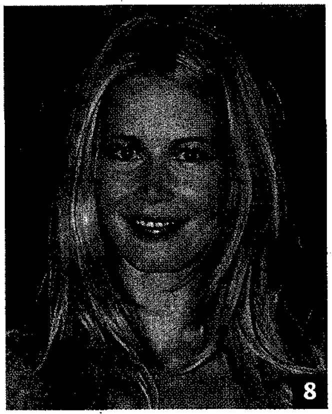
THE SCENE

A Healthy Outlook

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

INJURIES AND AILMENTS COULDN'T STOP A STYLISH CROWD FROM gathering at the Altman Building November 29 for the twentieth anniversary of the Hetrick-Martin Institute. An older fashion editor, draped in cashmere, limped through the packed cocktail lounge with the aid of a hand-carved cane; a few feet away, another well-dressed worthy gingerly unwrapped his silk scarf from a cumbersome neck brace. Despite the physical setbacks, guests were in high spirits as Hetrick-Martin, which helps the city's gay, lesbian, and transgender youth, honored some prominent friends for their contributions. The evening's emcee, Hilary Swank, her auburn, teased tresses a far cry from her cropped *Boys Don't Cry* do, hoarsely apologized to a group of journalists near the stage: "I'm sorry if I seem a bit out of it—I just stepped off a plane." Most audience members were too busy gushing over her film performance as the gender-bending Brandon Teena to notice. One guest feverishly inquired, "Is she gay?" "No," another admirer answered with resignation. "She's married to Rob Lowe's brother." Chastity Bono, nursing a foot injury, hobbled to the podium with the aid of a cane to accept an award for both her mom, Cher, and herself, but then seemed relieved to get away from the spotlight. Grooming guru Kevyn Aucoin, who accepted an award from Gena Rowlands, was certainly more relaxed on the soapbox as he went on (and on) about his role as a leader in the gay community, pausing only when an ambulance siren screeched outside to joke: "That's my ride!" MAURA EGAN





1. Nell Campbell and John Richardson at Pastis to celebrate the publication of Richardson's *The Sorcerer's Apprentice: Picasso, Provence and Douglas Cooper.* 2. Cynthia Rowley and Barry Sternlicht, the Starwood Hotels CEO, at the opening of the latest W New York–The Court hotel. 3. Dylan Brown and Duncan Sheik at the opening of the Sulka store at 840 Madison Avenue. 4. Pauline Trigère and Gloria Steinem at the thirteenth annual Citymeals-on-Wheels lunch at the Pierre Hotel. 5. John Bartlett at *Glamour* magazine's party for the publication of *Swell: A Girl's Guide to the Good Life* at the W New York–The Court hotel. 6. Jonathan Farkas and Somers White at the Horticultural Society of New York dinner-dance at the University Club. 7. Carolyne Roehm and Catherine Bryan at the New York City Ballet opening-night benefit at the New York State Theater. 8. Claudia Schiffer at Serena for the gala and silent auction of Patrick Demarchelier photos to benefit the Race to Erase MS. 9. Hilary Swank, Chastity Bono, Connie Chung, Kevyn Aucoin, and Dr. Mathilde Krim at the Altman Building.

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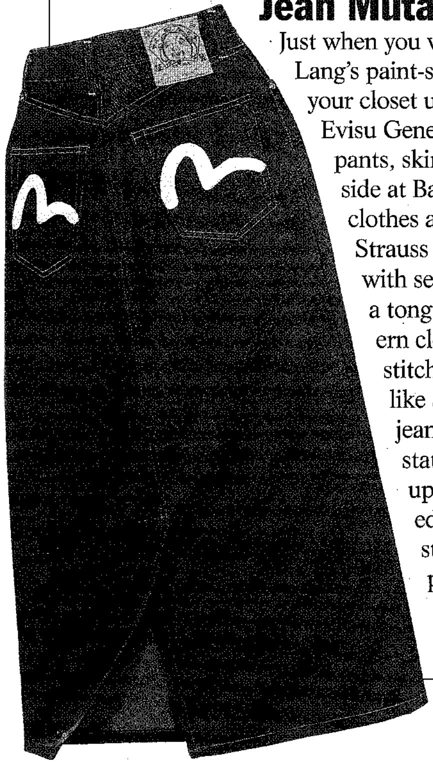
GOTHAMSTYLE

To Dye For

"I hesitate to use the word *tie-dye,* because it has such Grateful Dead connotations," says Michael Lublin, co-owner of the new shop MoMo FaLana (43 Avenue A; 212-979-9595). Lublin and his partner, Maureen Roberts, are known for the hand-dyed vintage slip dresses they sold at the 26th Street flea market to fans like Naomi, Claudia, and Shalom. Now their new cashmere cardigans, embroidered shawls, and colorful bed linens have already caught the eye of Uma Thurman, who may wear a psychedelic item or two in her upcoming film *Last Word on Paradise.* Just don't come looking for the sixties style's usual accoutrements here: You won't find any bongs or incense. MAURA EGAN

Jean Mutations



Just when you were ready to stow Helmut Lang's paint-splattered jeans in the back of your closet until the next eighties revival, Evisu Genes, a Japanese denim line of pants, skirts, and jackets, arrives Stateside at Barneys. The cardboard-stiff clothes are woven on original Levi Strauss looms and then hand-painted with seagull-like shapes on the rear as a tongue-in-cheek tribute to the Western clothier's traditional back-pocket stitching. Though the design looks like a haphazard graffiti tag, the jeans have already achieved cult status in London, where the rolled-up look (some pairs are also painted on the inside) is the latest streetwear uniform. If the hefty price ($225– $245) seems steep, you can always try finger-painting your 501s. M.E.

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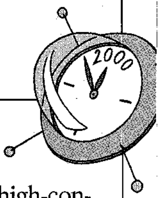
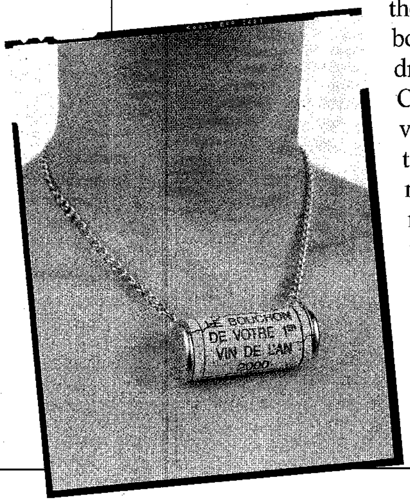
Not-So-Hidden Assets

First Petit Bateau's cheap children's tees became must-haves for the post-pigtails set. Now British duo Max Karie and Pippa Brooks have introduced ShopGirl, a collection of cotton and thermal underpinnings. The superthin knits from Damart (Europe's largest thermal-underwear producer), once favored by old ladies, have been modernized and tarted up with lace trimming on the pink and gray camisoles, cardigans, and panties (available at Henri Bendel and Bergdorf Goodman; prices range from $35 to $100). Though patterns of waddling ducks and pink ribbons may suggest childish innocence, the look is more Rollergirl than schoolgirl, and the underwear has already shown up as outerwear on Drew Barrymore, Courtney Love, and Traci Lords. SUZANNE D'AMATO

MILLENNIUM WATCH

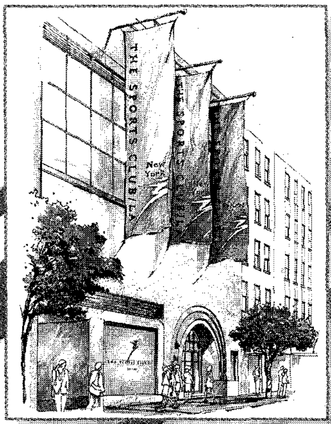


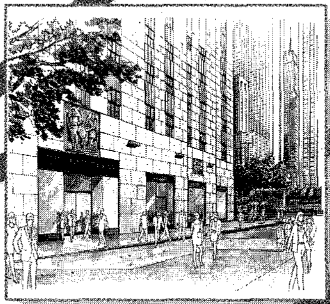
Entering the race to roll out millennial merchandise, designer Martin Margiela has come up with his own high-concept party favor: the wine-cork necklace. The cleverer-than-thou designer intends the chain and pendant ($100, available at Untitled and If) to be both evening accessory and holiday souvenir. The bauble comes with instructions advising wearers to replace the necklace's cork with the cork from the first bottle of wine they drink in the year 2000. Clever, maybe, but not very practical: When the clock strikes midnight, the only revelers struggling with corkscrews will be the disgruntled few who haven't been able to get their hands on a bottle of champagne. M.E.



Photographs: clockwise from top right, Michael Kraus (3); Luke Hoverman. Illustration by Ingo Fast.

Coming...in the Millennium





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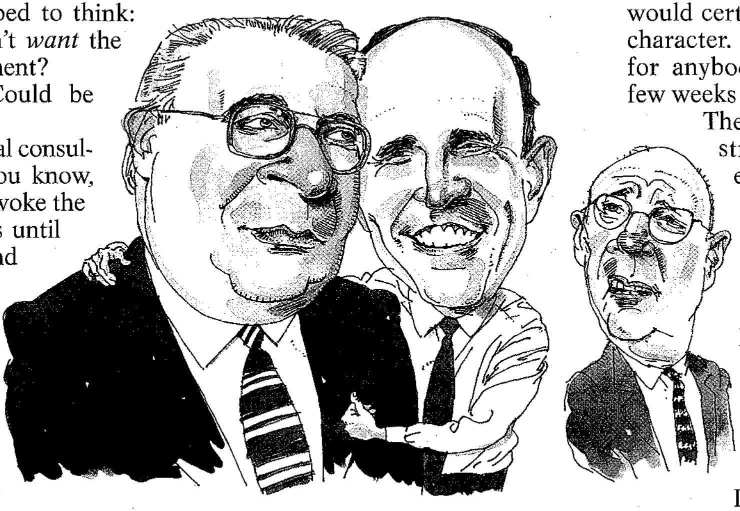
THE CITY POLITIC MICHAEL TOMASKY

Long Shot

Refusing to dance with Mike Long could help Rudy win the middle and push Hillary farther to the left. That doesn't sound like suicide—it sounds like a strategy.

SO WE'VE LEARNED THAT MIKE Long, the head of New York's Conservative Party, doesn't have much use for Rudy Giuliani. He (Long) will not steer his party's nomination in the direction of a man inclined toward defense of late-term/partial-birth abortions. The mayor, so inclined, is disinclined to tailor his views on the matter. So, it appears, no Conservative Party ballot line for Rudy. And this, the chorus agrees unanimously, is a disaster for the mayor.



Ray Harding could be more useful to Rudy than Long is in taking on Hillary.

But has anyone stopped to think: Maybe the mayor doesn't *want* the Conservatives' endorsement?

It's just a theory. Could be wrong. But let's mull it.

"Hmmm," says political consultant Norman Adler. "You know, we have a tendency to invoke the same mantras in politics until they're disproved, and then we invoke them for a few years more anyway." Alas, too true. And the mantra this year is: *No . . . Republican . . . can . . . win . . . statewide . . . office . . . without . . . the . . . support . . . of . . . the . . . Conservatives.* The mantra's explanatory sentence is that no Republican has done it in 25 years—the late senator Jacob Javits, who used to run as a Republican-Liberal, won his last election in 1974 (then Rocky died, Reagan came, Alfonse beat Javits, and you know the rest). And there the conversation stops.

But there's a next question that no one ever asks: *Why* hasn't anyone done it? Well, it could be, perhaps, that their shoes were too tight. It could be their heads weren't screwed on just right. But I think that the most likely reason of all is . . . no one's tried.

OKAY. THERE IS A MORE VALID REASON, TO which I allude in the above parenthetical—the country moved to the right after 1980, and the Conservative Party became ascendant, at least by the standards of a minor party. Since then, Republicans and Conservatives have worked, with one or two exceptions, in concert. A Republican running for statewide office gets, say, 2.5 million votes on the Republican line, and perhaps 300,000 or more on the Conservative line—an insurance policy that can come in rather handy in a close election. That's the mold.

But if there's one thing Rudy likes to break, it's the mold. So think about this: Undoubtedly, Hillary Clinton would do nicely with the mayor's accepting the Conservative line. It helps her make the argument that Rudy equals Trent Lott equals Jesse Helms. This is exactly the case she wants to make: She has the left and the center and pushes the mayor to the right. That's a race that, in this state, a competent Democrat (this assumes, of course, that she becomes one) wins.

But say Rudy doesn't take the Conservative line. Then it becomes a little harder for Mrs. C to tar him with the brush of Lott. "Well, the fact is that he *is* on the right," says her spokesman, Howard Wolfson. "He's been running to the right since the day he thought about running in this race." Wolfson ticks off the litany—the mayor's tentative stance on a patient's bill of rights, opposition to the test-ban treaty, support for the GOP Congress's budget and tax-cut proposal, recent hosannas to Reaganomics.

All true. But this is where the Liberal Party comes in. The Liberal line, bequeathed him in three mayoral races by Ray Harding, is the mayor's for the asking. A Republican-Liberal Giuliani would be harder to paint into a conservative corner and would be able to stake a claim to the middle and push Mrs. Clinton to the left.

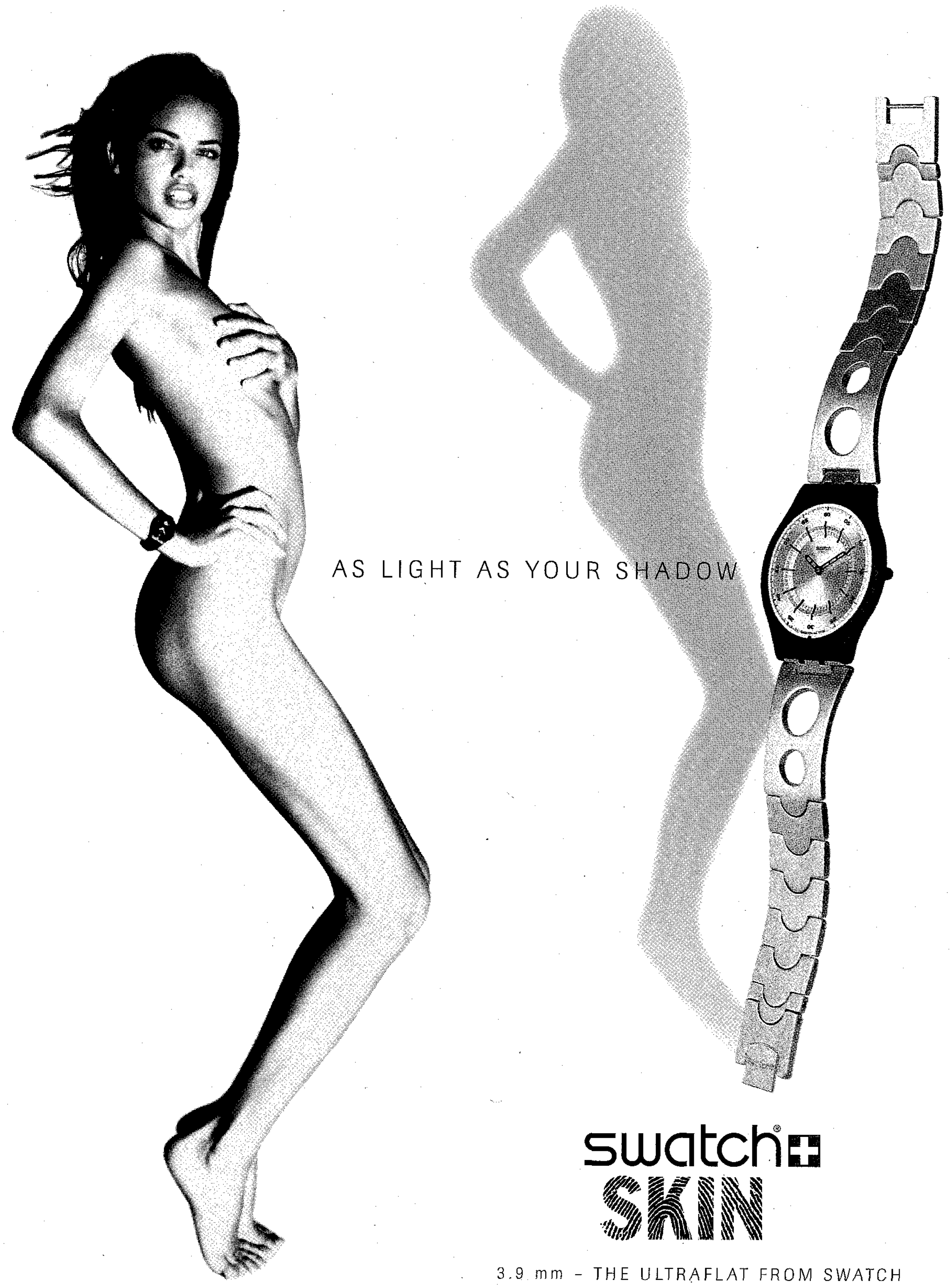
This would be smart politics. And it would certainly be in keeping with his character. He's not a man who bends, for anybody. Something happened a few weeks ago that few people noticed. The Brooklyn Museum maelstrom was at its crescendo; everybody was writing about how Rudy was Hail Mary–ing to curry favor with Long, a Catholic father of nine children. Then, that very Saturday, what does Rudy do? He goes on Evans and Novak's CNN program and vows that he will never change his position on partial-birth abortions. Take it or leave it. Even Mike Long—whom a source once described to me as "the only man who's ever told Al D'Amato to go fuck himself"—has to eat dung off Rudy's plate.

"What he's doing so far fits with his personality," says an insider who knows the mayor well. "He goes with the people he trusts. And he just doesn't trust the Conservatives."

Some observers believe Rudy may be offered the Conservative line. By this they mean that Long will soften, maybe at the governor's behest. But they do not mean that Giuliani will change his position on abortion. "I think if the mayor had his druthers, he'd take their line, as long as he didn't have to do much for it," says a Democratic operative. "But if he has to flip on abortion, he won't take it, and he'll turn it into a principled stand."

Rudy's inflexibility is often more char-

Illustration by Joe Ciardiello.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acterological than ideological, so his position is in truth some combination of principle and stubbornness. But still, it won't be hard for him to present it to voters as a position of abiding principle. Which plays to his greatest strength, the man of conviction who does what he thinks is right and not what the polls or party people tell him to do. *That* will sell.

THAT'S THE UPSIDE. THE DOWNSIDE IS THIS: The Conservatives will run someone. "He probably thought he would be so big and so powerful that I would just leave the line blank," Long says. "Know what? I'm not doing it."

The question is how many votes that candidate gets. (By the way, a source says the two potential candidates to whom Long is speaking are not elected officials: One's a wealthy businessman, and the other is "on the periphery" of politics; Long adds that he now has a third potential candidate-in-waiting). Conventional wisdom says around 300,000. The Liberal line, by contrast, is worth 100,000 votes at best. But my theory depends on Giuliani's picking up a few hundred thousand more from Independents and Democrats, which is entirely plausible.

> *" 'He probably thought he would be so big and so powerful that* **I would just leave the line blank.** *Know what? I'm not doing it,' Conservative Party leader Mike Long says of Giuliani."*

Others say 300,000 is lowballing it, that the number could be twice that or more. A woman named Barbara Keating ran against Javits in 1974 and scored around 820,000 votes.

But that was 1974. Things have changed. The Conservative Party is powerful, but no one really knows how powerful because no serious candidate has tested its perimeter. Besides, with George W trotting toward the center and Newt Gingrich reduced to delivering lectures on nutrition (it's one of his new issues, apparently), small-*c* conservatism is scarcely the roaring lion these days that it was just a few years ago. Mantras, like molds, are made to be broken. Maybe Rudy understands this. ■

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THE BOTTOM LINE MARION MANEKER

Marital Bliss

What does a $23 billion multinational like Bernard Arnault's LVMH see in a small, New York–based beauty company like Bliss Spa? The start of a beautiful relationship.

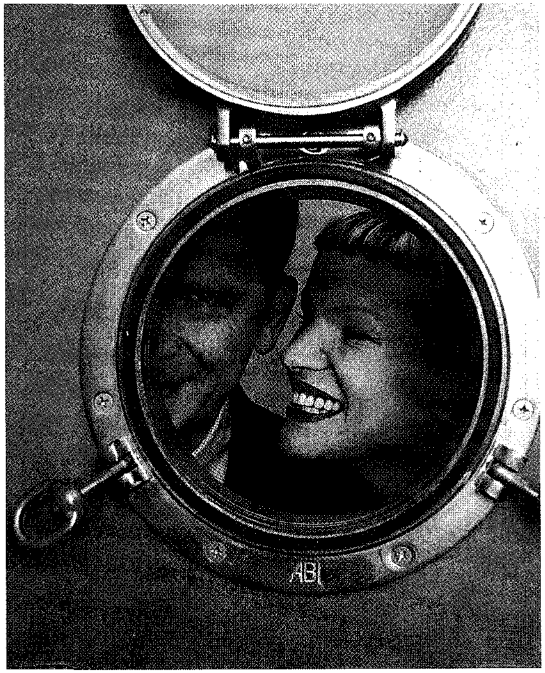
LVMH, THE INFAMOUSLY ACQUISITIVE luxury-goods conglomerate, opens its American headquarters this week with a series of exclusive events at the new jagged-glass tower it built near high-end retailing's ground zero: the intersection of Madison and 57th. Coming so soon after LVMH's new stake in Fendi and Tag Heuer—and its spectacular failure to acquire Gucci—the building's opening should be chairman Bernard Arnault's true coming-out party as *the* corporate titan of late-nineties luxury.

The headquarters is an eye-catching symbol of Arnault's American ambitions and of the triumph of shopping-as-culture. Christian Dior will have a boutique on the ground floor; the penthouse duplex will be the stage for lavish, boldfaced-name parties; and tucked away on the third floor of the tower will be the uptown branch of the fashionable SoHo spa Bliss.

The spa's inclusion in the LVMH mother ship is not a bonus to employees or a perk for Arnault's string of socialite envoys. A homegrown New York success story, Bliss has in three years gone from a modest spa to a multi-million-dollar beauty business. In March, LVMH acquired 70 percent of the company in a complicated transaction tied to projected revenues—widely reported as a $30 million deal. But the comparatively small purchase appears to be a break with LVMH's previous strategy of pursuing European prestige brands.

Patrick Choël, the president of LVMH's cosmetics division, is adamant that Bliss represents an important new move for the company, even though Bliss, until now, was only a tiny spa with one location. "I insisted we have it in the building," he says. "We were clearly not on the map in the U.S. Strategically, Bliss was the first move toward acquiring some small but promising U.S. brands." Choël calls these brands—which include the sassy nail-polish-maker Hard Candy and a San Francisco skin-care line called Benefit—a departure for LVMH because they are young, "fun," and clearly American.

Given LVMH's reputation as a corporate raider, not an incubator of scrappy entrepreneurs, you have to wonder why Bliss would put itself under Arnault's wing. But the flap over Gucci has obscured Arnault's M.O.: LVMH finds inspired people, provides them with investment muscle, and lets them loose on the world.



Thierry Boué and Marcia Kilgore mix business with pleasure.

THE LEAST INTERESTING THING ABOUT Bliss is that it's a spa. Spas used to be associated with middle-European ladies of an indeterminate age. Anyone remember Rula Lenska? Then they became New Age massage havens. But Bliss, with its six-month waiting list, celebrity clientele, and downtown cachet, operates in Arnault's familiar territory.

"Women have been getting facials for hundreds of years—just ask anyone in Hungary," says Christine Shea, the beauty director at *Harper's Bazaar*, brimful with admiration. "Bliss gave it a positive, pop-culture spin, making it fun, tongue-in-cheek, and giving it the sex appeal of celebrity. There is nothing more American than what Bliss is doing right now."

The Bliss story is all about Marcia Kilgore, a taut 31-year-old with a blonde bob and bangs. She has the intensity and star quality of a Susan Powter. Or let's say, a hipper Susan Powter.

Kilgore's story starts in the Canadian midwest with a personal problem (bad skin); continues on the floor of her New York apartment where she gives facials and builds a following; and ends with a business based on her down-to-earth personality and an epidemic of good word-of-mouth. "You went there for her sense of humor," says one patron of her first business, Let's Face It, a jewel-box spa for facials where 16-year-old wannabe models with stubborn pimples were sent by their agencies.

Her "in" with the style tribe led to good connections with the women's magazines, and Kilgore worked the beauty editors like a P.R. pro. "You could always count on her for a good quote," confesses Shea. "She got a lot of coverage in the fashion magazines."

Then, in 1996, Kilgore transformed Let's Face It into Bliss. "You felt cool when you went there. It was just such a groovy place," remarks a regular, referring as much to the décor as the crowd. In SoHo, it has a sleek look offset by clever visual jokes: hairy brown lamb's-wool ottomans, a glass wall holding a shower of feathers in suspended animation; and the new quarters on 57th adds elegant, tactile limestone tiles to the mix.

The spa also has a reputation for sending clients home with a basket filled with products whose high prices often shock the uninitiated. "She has a really great eye," Shea admits, "and stocked

Photograph by Mark Arbeit.

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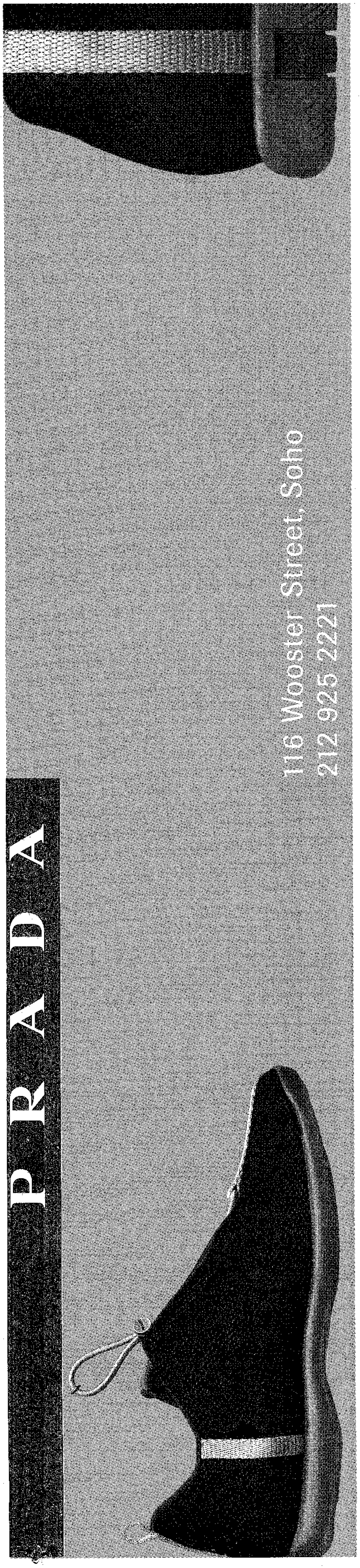


the spa with some amazing products, things that women really want." The product line seemed to naturally segue into a catalogue, which has now spawned an Internet business. Altogether the company brought in $11 million in 1998 and is planning to close out 1999 at $20 million in revenue.

AS SUCCESSFUL AS KILGORE WAS IN CREATing a soul for Bliss, her grander ambitions have been abetted by Thierry Boué, a Mr. Inside to her Ms. Outside. Kilgore describes Boué, who is now both her husband and the company's CEO, as "a real hard-ass." High praise when you understand that he negotiated the $30 million LVMH deal. But for Boué, the son of a Parisian nuclear physicist, "the business is Marcia's personality."

Boué had been a friend of Marcia's sister. But the decision to become business partners came only when he finally asked Kilgore to stop calling him for advice on everything from where to find bottles to how one reads a contract from the Home Shopping Network. Now he acts as the counterweight to her obsessive nature (obsessive to the point of having liposuction to remove a tiny build-up of fat on her thighs, already toned from years of work as a personal trainer).

"When we started the catalogue," Boué recollects, "Marcia was still giving facials six days a week. It took some working on her to make her understand her productivity would be much greater if she did it only three days a week. Now we are down to one."

Boué used to be a photographer's agent, and it was his experiences with models and editors that helped him recognize the spa experience as a *fashion* experience, with Marcia filling the role of designer and taste arbiter. "Marcia has a very intelligent spa," he says. "She comes up with a new collection of services and a new way of seducing your clientele into coming back." If that isn't fashion, nothing is.

And if the spa is something like an exclusive couture line, then the merchandise is her ready-to-wear and licensing business all rolled into one. The catalogue of beauty products—her two lines and other products she likes—now goes out six times a year to a list of 1 million, and the Internet business is a thriving extension of it. The catalogue is filled with the same flighty riffs ("the Waterwoo" and "the Girly Glosser") and puns so corny they're cute ("Blissmas") that have propelled so much of the company's growth. Marcia's commitment to mass appeal even extends to marketing low-price bikini wax on QVC, where she appears every month or so. During one summer weekend, she moved over a million dollars' worth of wax.

While pushing ahead on all fronts at once, the business problem now becomes how to grow without losing Marcia's personal touch. Some of the style crowd are already complaining that the SoHo spa is no longer a relaxing place. "It's like a factory in there," says one disillusioned fashion insider.

Boué frets about Bliss's transition from mom-and-pop operation to charts-and-presentations bureaucracy. "If it becomes too corporate, I think it will lose its identity and essence. This is where Marcia must become more of a creative force."

Kilgore, who still trains the staff, agrees. "I am trying to let go of things and not take responsibility for everything," she says one Saturday morning at the spa. An employee laughs in the background. "Shut up, Kate," she says good-naturedly. "And by the way, the speakers are not working in the locker room."

> *Kilgore describes Boué, who is now both her husband and the company's CEO, as "a real hard-ass."* **High praise** *when you understand that he negotiated the $30 million LVMH deal.*

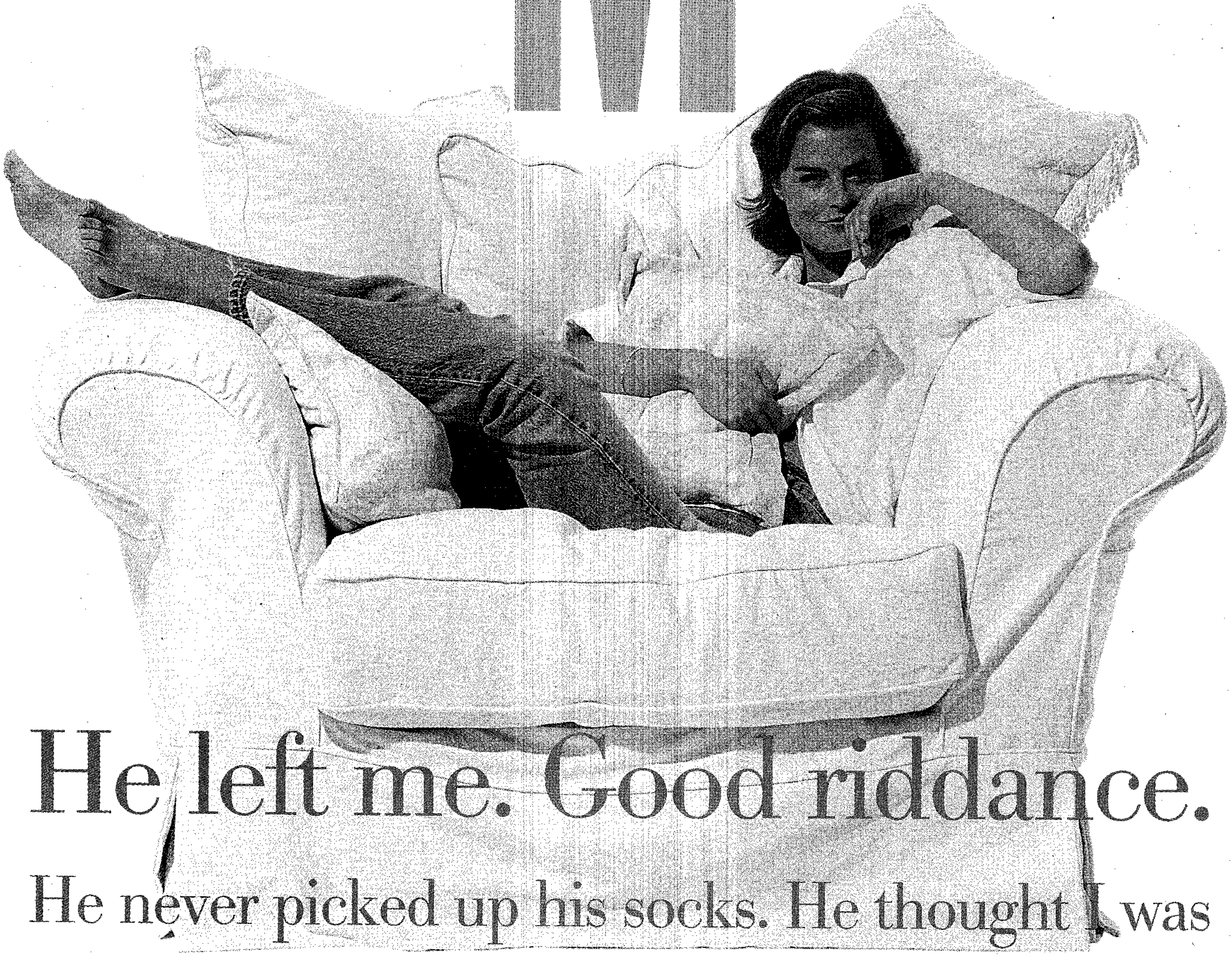
THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT BLISS COULD have kept expanding without LVMH's capital, but Arnault's backing will put them into high gear. What might have seemed like a Faustian bargain to Gucci may offer Bliss immortality—without the misery.

In addition to the beauty-products business, they plan to expand into London and possibly Chicago or "the West Coast." They also claim to be at work on 50–100 service-station-style "nail bars" that could extend the Bliss brand beyond the time-consuming massage-and-facial business. If they pull it off, they'll surely lure more customers to the catalogue and Website.

Arnault's investment in Bliss is clearly no small matter. So when Kilgore mentions Bliss in the same breath as the Gap, it may be worth taking her seriously. ■

MONTAUK

BOHADESIGN



He left me. Good riddance.

He never picked up his socks. He thought I was his mother. He didn't make me laugh anymore.

He's gone. Who cares... I kept the sofa.

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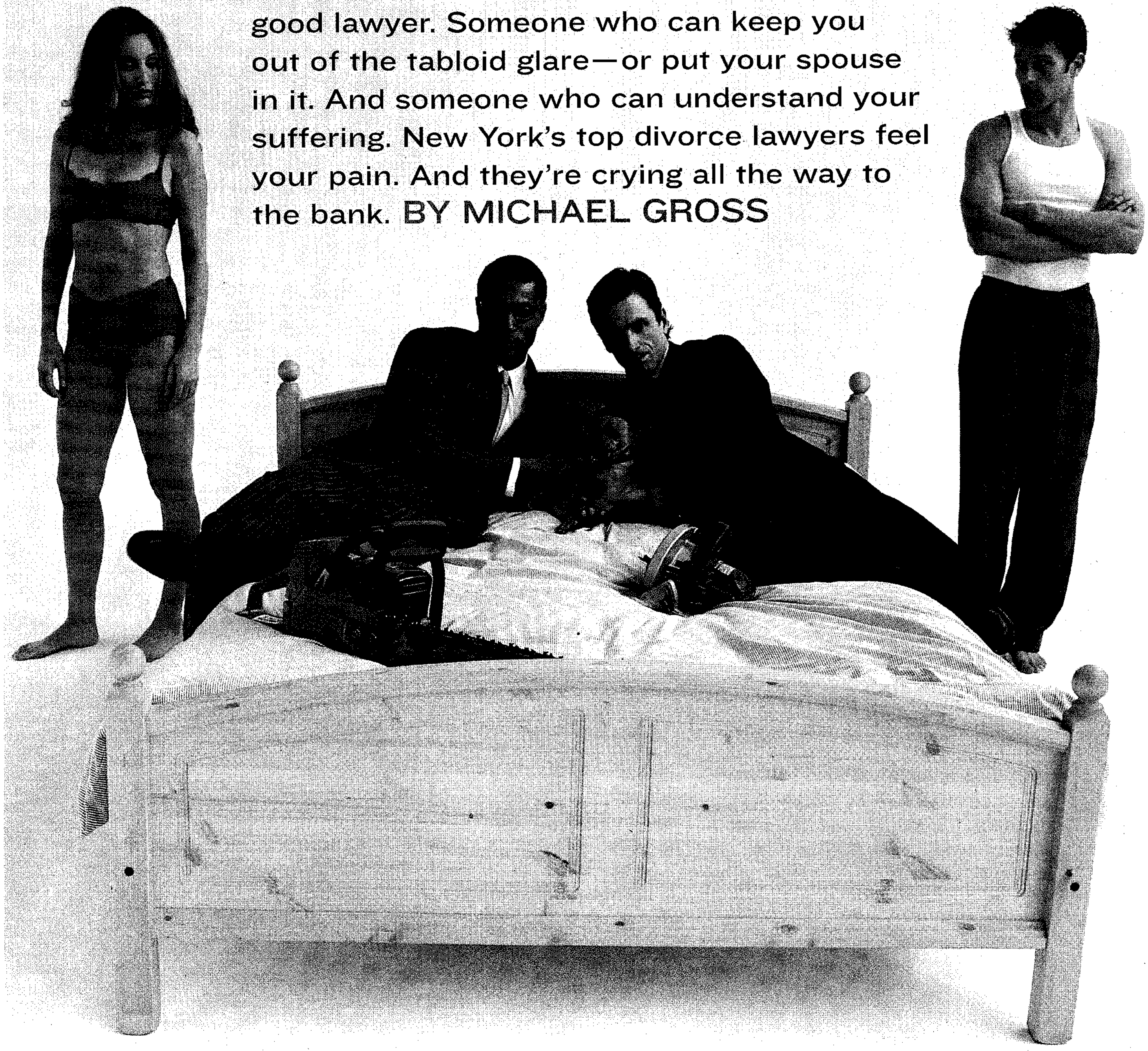
TROUBLE IN

As matrimonial law grows ever more complex, getting out of a marriage requires a very good lawyer. Someone who can keep you out of the tabloid glare—or put your spouse in it. And someone who can understand your suffering. New York's top divorce lawyers feel your pain. And they're crying all the way to the bank. BY MICHAEL GROSS



SPLITSVILLE

ONE BRIGHT, COLD MORNING IN NOVEMBER, PUBLISHER AND "PAGE SIX" FIXTURE Judith Regan stood on the monumental steps of New York State Supreme Court in downtown Manhattan, choking down a mouthful of bile. Seven years ago, Regan entered the world of divorce, Manhattan-style, when her husband, a money manager, served her with papers to dissolve their marriage. Finally, two weeks ago, she was granted a financial settlement (she won custody of her child in 1995), but she's yet to see a cent; even though he lost, her ex can still appeal, which could tie her life in knots for many months more. The cost to date—not including time and emotional toll? More than $1 million. • It's safe to say that Regan isn't fond of her ex-husband; but she holds divorce lawyers largely responsible for the past seven years of torture. Divorce, she's come to believe, is a racket, designed solely to benefit what might be called Divorce, Incorporated, a permanent establishment of lawyers and experts that profits from other people's marital missteps. "Being the best divorce lawyer in New York is like being the best devil in Hell," she sneers. "It means you're avaricious, conniving, and vicious. It's a game of monopoly played by an elite inside group. Lawyers?" She pumps her arm as if playing a slot machine. "*Ka-ching.* Evaluators? *Ka-ching.* Experts? *Ka-ching.* Psychologists? *Ka-ching.* Nobody ever explained it to me, so I'd ask questions all the time. You'd get billed just for asking. *Ka-ching, ka-ching.* Call back tomorrow. *Ka-ching.*" • Regan's vitriol even splashes Joan Ellenbogen, the only one of seven lawyers who represented her whom Regan praises—if you want to call it praise. Ellenbogen, whose BMW bears the license plate DRL 237—for a section of the domestic-relations law that governs attorneys' fees—"could spot a vein in your neck at 300 yards and suck the blood out of you in a second," Regan says. "The real horror is that you need someone who gets off on that to win." • Divorce, once a disgrace, has become a great diversion, a never-ending soap opera of boldfaced names, bald-faced lies, tawdry testimony, poor little rich kids, bulletproof prenups, and record-setting settlements—like the one expected any day in the divorce of Ronald O. Perelman and Patricia Duff. And as Duff, who's gone through nearly three times as many divorce lawyers as has Regan, puts it, "Divorce law is not about justice or fairness or protecting anyone's rights or what's best for a child; it is big business." The business has

Matrix

Photographed by Karen Kuehn

THE AVENGERS Left to right, Bernard Clair, Eleanor Alter, Stanford Lotwin, William Beslow, Robert Cohen, Norman Sheresky, and Peter Bronstein.

become even bigger recently, as a series of controversial judicial innovations that value not just property but such intangibles as celebrity and future earning potential have made divorce, as leading attorney Robert Stephan Cohen puts it, "exponentially more complicated on a week-by-week basis."

For lawyers, complications add up to accounts receivable, amplifying the already considerable bitterness involved in the process. "The first thing they get is a net-worth statement," says plastic surgeon Ronald Linder, another disgusted divorcé. "Then they make sure they get your total net worth."

SITTING IN HIS OFFICE HIGH ABOVE Madison Avenue, surrounded by art, tchotchkes, and other signs of his prodigious wealth and (not always good) taste, Raoul Lionel Felder, the best-known, if not the best, divorce lawyer in Manhattan, wriggles his toes in one of his hundreds of pairs of monogrammed slippers (he also collects Nazi memorabilia, fountain pens, and defused hand grenades) and says that divorce and associated actions over support, temporary custody, visitation, relocation of children, exclusive occupancy of residences, stopping a spouse from spending marital assets, protective orders, paternity, palimony, and contempt generate about $200 million a year for local law firms.

There are big profits in pain. A 1992 study pegged the price of a relatively simple middle-class divorce at $50,000. The biggest fees—$1 million and up—are earned at trials (there were 138 of those in New York County in 1998) and from contested divorces that end before or at trial (1,003 last year). But legal fees aren't all that's at stake in Splitsville. Divorce is a cottage industry, employing legions of guardians, social workers, counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, evaluators, appraisers, actuaries, accountants, and private eyes, to the tune, Felder guesstimates, of $50 million more a year. That doesn't include all the judges, court reporters, law secretaries, or public-relations counselors—or, just for the record, those recently revealed payoffs by high-volume divorce mills to courthouse clerks.

REGAN IS RIGHT WHEN SHE CHARGES that there's a matrimonial mafia. The best lawyers constantly socialize, come up against each other in cases, cut deals, warn their fellows about clients who don't pay their fees, represent each other in their own divorces, and rarely criticize each other—on the record, at least. "Smarter clients don't have a problem with our ability to get on with each other," says Donald Frank, who's built up many alliances in his 30 years at the divorce bar.

Professional jealousy and pathological competitiveness lurk just beneath the surface, though. Felder sued Norman Sheresky for libel after the latter opined in an interview that the former didn't know how to try a case; a judge found that to be constitutionally protected opinion. And a few months ago, Harriet Newman Cohen, a vocal feminist who is disdained by many of her colleagues at the bar, incurred the wrath of William Beslow after she replaced him as Patricia Duff's attorney when she dissed Beslow in front of a judge as having a limited involvement in the case. (Beslow, by several accounts, was actually on the verge of achieving a settlement favorable to Duff.)

You don't need to press too hard to get divorce lawyers to admit they love their backstage access to the rich and famous. "It was a big kick for me to go up to the top of the world," Stanford Lotwin says, remembering the day Donald Trump hired him. "Matrimonial practice is stressful, but it's never boring. Socially, it opens tremendous doors. You become so close to your clients that they invite you to their homes, on their boats. I have flown with Donald on his 727."

"I live like my clients," George Raft–style tough guy Bob Cohen says flatly, offering a peek at his pride—and his Sulka cuff links.

You have to press a little harder to get anyone in this self-made bunch to admit to ambivalence about what they do for a living. "There's nothing to be proud of here," says Felder, stroking his beard in a gesture perfected in countless client interviews. "Some of it is healing, helping. But a certain part of it is parasitic. Sadly, there will always be a place for me."

IT'S MORNING IN JUSTICE MARYLIN G. Diamond's court. Rows of benches in the back of the room fill with lawyers and litigants. It's easy to spot the splitting couples as they bounce away from each other like magnetic Scottie dogs, their attorneys shuttling between them like jittery iron filings.

One prosperous pair catches my eye as they studiously avoid each other's. J. is fiftyish, swarthy, with a full head of gray hair. He wears designer sunglasses, a blue polo shirt, khakis, and brown suede shoes, and keeps sneaking peeks at his wife, L., a drawn but attractive blonde who wears her khakis with a beige tweed jacket and two-tone ballet slippers. They've been in court about an hour when they're called into Diamond's robing room; when they emerge fifteen minutes later, she is smiling and he is glumly reading a letter, muttering "Bullshit!" under his breath.

Forty minutes pass as lawyers shuttle between J., in the courtroom, and L., in

RAOUL LIONEL FELDER

Hourly Rate $450

Provenance New York University; New York University Law. In his first divorce case, represented a fellow cuckolded by his best man; made page 3 of the *Daily News.*

Modus Operandi Distracted, except around reporters. "He's a showman who doesn't give a shit," says Norman Sheresky. "He gives a shit about seeing his name in the paper. I think he's without a conscience."

Clients Peter Beard, Brian De Palma, Claude Picasso, Sol Goldman, David Merrick, Alec Wildenstein, a former girlfriend of Peter O'Toole, and the ex-wives of David Merrick, Martin Revson, David Susskind, Martin Scorsese, Mark Gastineau, Joseph Heller, Huntington Hartford, Donald Marron, Saul Steinberg, Carl Sagan, Roone Arledge, Frank Gifford, and Andrew Capasso.

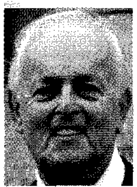
Legal Landmarks Won a third of taxi mogul Robert Scull's Pop Art collection for his wife, Ethel. Claims to be the first lawyer to collect a $1 million fee.

Low Points Publicly declared Robin Givens wanted nothing from Mike Tyson one day after privately demanding an $8 million settlement. Filed a $7 million libel suit against colleague Norman Sheresky—who'd said Felder "pretends to be a trial lawyer when he's not. He has no familiarity with how to try a case." The suit was thrown out of court.

Marital Status Myrna Felder, a former Broadway showgirl and his wife of 36 years, is a highly regarded lawyer who handles Felder's appellate work. When she fought to open the Friars Club to women, however, Felder opposed her.

Matrimonial Wisdom "I'm a pimp. Sadly, there'll always be a place for me."

NORMAN SHERESKY



Hourly Rate $500

Provenance Harvard Law.

Modus Operandi Puckish and dapper; very effective with women.

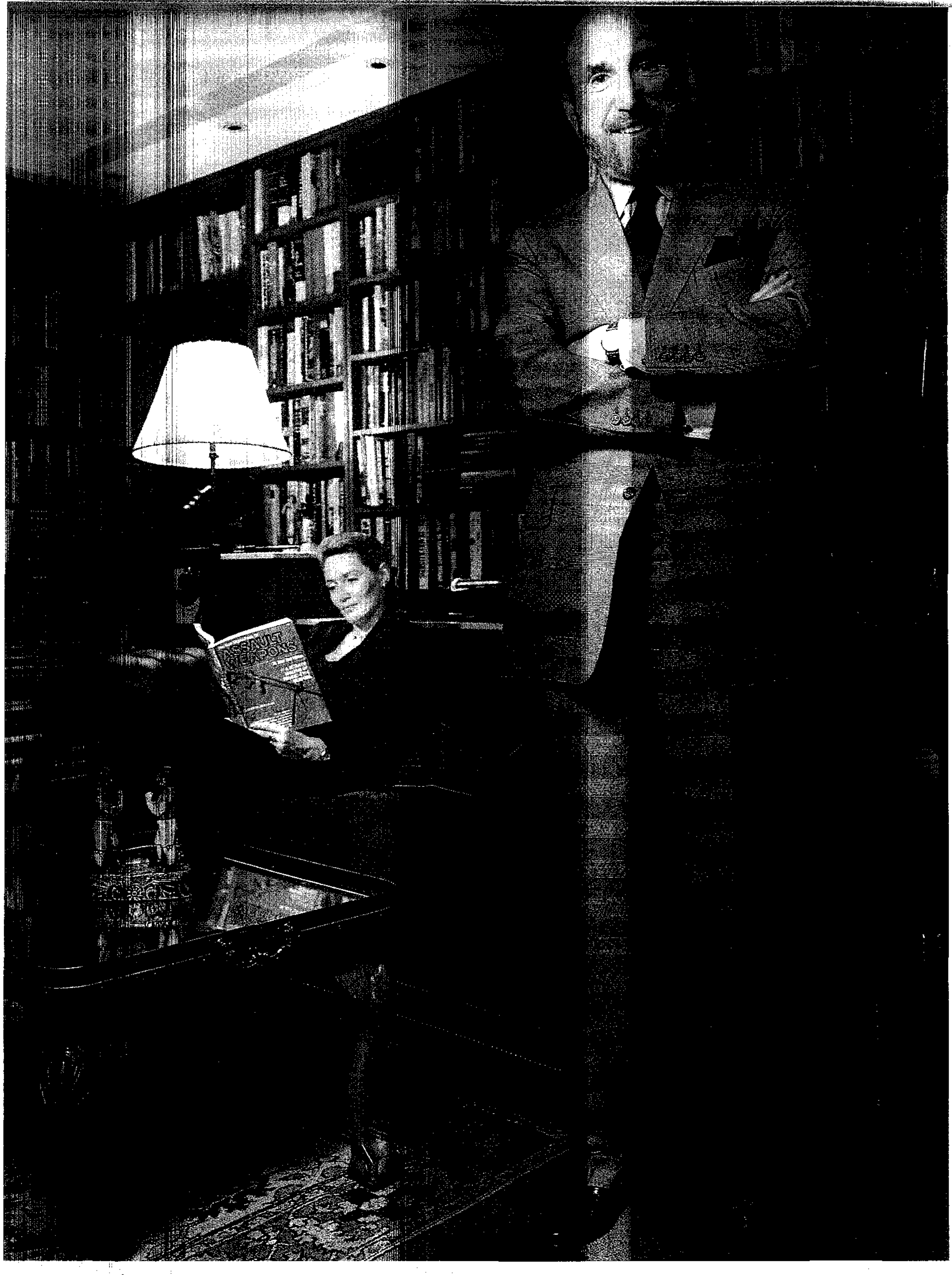
Clients Iman, Nancy Richardson, Kay LeRoy, Patricia Duff, ex-wives of Robert Duvall and Dustin Hoffman.

Legal Landmarks Claims victory in New York's first large-scale equitable-distribution case, *Karp* v. *Karp,* in which he won 30 percent of marital assets for Mrs. Karp. Won Kay LeRoy $22 million plus $61,000 a month.

Marital Status Divorced (he kept paying his first wife alimony even after she remarried); fell in love with and married a former client, an ex-actress and competition ballroom dancer.

Matrimonial Wisdom "I think there's some-

Photographs, top to bottom: Karen Kuehn/Matrix; Arnaldo Magnani/Liaison Agency; Karen Kuehn/Matrix.



THE BUCKS STOP HERE Raoul Felder, with his client Natalia Khodaeva, in his penthouse library.

the hall. Finally, all huddle as the lawyers argue and the clients affect to ignore each other. When L. heads out into the hallway again, I approach her, and, after assuring her I won't use her name ("I'm not Patricia Duff," she pleads), ask what's going on. As she begins to explain—they're arguing about money, of course—her husband bears down on us. "This is what he does, he follows me," she says. Then her voice drops to a pleading whisper: "Act like you're in love with me?"

THIRTY YEARS AGO, IN THE DIVORCE dark ages, the only ground for divorce in New York was adultery, and marital property belonged to whichever spouse had his name on the title. Stress *his.* The most a wife could expect was lifetime alimony, unless her husband's lawyer's private detective photographed her *in flagrante,* in which case she was lucky if she ended up with much else besides the kids.

Divorce began changing in the late sixties as innovations like no-fault splits and equitable-distribution laws made it no longer a matter of who did what but of who got what. The old and new styles of divorce-lawyering began to blend when California's Marvin Mitchelson, whose invention of palimony made him a celebrity, stumbled in a sex, drug, and tax-evasion scandal, and New York's Raoul Felder took his place, both literally—he picked off client Robin Givens, who was divorcing Mike Tyson—and in the larger sense, becoming the world's most famous divorce lawyer.

Felder often jokes that the romance went out of divorce when New York belatedly caught up with the rest of the country and instituted its Equitable Distribution Act, which replaced permanent alimony for wives with temporary maintenance for the lower-earning spouse and a gender-neutral distribution of marital assets. Equitable distribution, though better than what it replaced, was far from perfect. For one thing, it left the most crucial matters in contested divorces —custody and money—up to the discretion of judges.

Nowadays, lawyers have to play constant catch-up as new, intangible assets are added to the marital-property pot. In 1985, in *O'Brien* v. *O'Brien*—a case in which a teacher stood by her man through medical school, only to be dumped after he'd gotten his license and left her for another woman—New York's Court of Appeals established that professional licenses could be marital property. "Nobody felt sorry for Dr. O'Brien," says David Aronson of the top divorce-law boutique Sheresky, Aronson and Mayefsky, "but the court didn't say, 'This only applies to pricks.' "

In 1987, academic degrees were granted the same status. Then, in 1988, a judge ruled that actress Marisa Berenson's "celebrity status" was a marital asset. Ironically, although Berenson's ex-husband, pit-bull trial lawyer Richard Golub, established that principle, he was denied a share of her assets because he submitted no appraisal of their worth, while Berenson got 10 percent of the increase in value of his legal practice during their marriage.

With all those new laws, marital litigation was bound to get more creative. Men began demanding support, assets, and celebrity value from spouses like TV star Joan Lunden, designer Mary McFadden, and model Ashley Richardson. "The law is gender-neutral, but when a guy is seeking alimony, his lawyer still has to prove he's not a slug," smirks a female attorney. Still, in 1991, opera singer Frederica von Stade was forced to fork over a share of her earnings to her husband of seventeen years. And in 1993, financier-felon Ivan Boesky sought $1 million annually from his wife, Seema, and won $180,000 in temporary support.

The latest innovation is called enhanced earnings. "It's an accounting formula that puts a value on the growth of a spouse's earning power during the marriage and in effect gives the other spouse a share of future earnings until retirement," says John Vassallo, who's represented Mick Jagger, Peter Jennings, and Harvey Keitel. "It's a nightmare that makes it extremely difficult to settle cases, because the end result is huge numbers without hard assets to back them up. It's like trying to value an illusion."

How bad can it get? Lawyer Stanley Plesent is currently representing a colleague whose wife, at trial, was awarded half their marital assets (all purchased with his earnings), half the value of his law practice, child support, and lifetime maintenance—and then the appellate court, the second-highest in the state, added in half the value of his law license. "It's all based on what *will* happen, and while she's waiting for full payment—she's getting annual installments—the appellate court added 9 percent interest on the unpaid balance," says Plesent, who's been granted leave to appeal.

"YOU'RE SITTING at your desk and in walks a famous artist, an actor, the chairman of a company, and in fifteen minutes, you know their every deep, dark secret."

IN HIGH-PROFILE CASES, OR THOSE WHOSE details are especially sordid, divorce lawyers have always had an additional weapon: the tabloids. Settle, or I'll call "Page Six." This is what might be called the Felder gambit, after its acknowledged master. To those who call it extortion, Felder counters, "Isn't every lawsuit a form of legal extortion? The law is constructed that way. Pay me or go to court."

While most top lawyers insist they go to the press only when their clients want them to, they'll happily admit that others do spill secrets, as Bob Cohen puts it, "to bootstrap their careers." Still, many consider divorce lawyers the worst kind of glory hounds. "They call the tabloids and give them dirt on you and overstate to make themselves look good," says Judith Regan. A gossip columnist confirms, "They'll do anything to see their names in the papers."

We're in family court, where Felder is arguing that reporters should be allowed to watch his client, Natalia Khodaeva, a freelance model, press a paternity suit against politically connected insurance businessman Jack Rosen. Rosen, who is married with children, fought the suit for months until, the day before this hearing, an item about his alleged dalliance and the daughter that allegedly resulted ran in the *Post*. "People remember things that appear in the press," Rosen's studious young lawyer, Alton Abramowitz, tells the judge, arguing that more coverage could stigmatize the child. The two reporters present are soon asked to leave, but it's an empty gesture. Fifteen minutes later, Felder and Khodaeva emerge triumphant. Rosen, who isn't present, is no longer contesting paternity.

That doesn't mean he's stopped fighting. Felder's press ploy may have backfired. The bullet of embarrassment only has cash value when it's in the chamber. Rosen hasn't actually admitted the child is his—and he clearly plans to fight Khodaeva all the way. "There'll be a support hearing," a source close to the case says, pausing meaningfully, ". . . in the next few years."

Rosen's side considers Khodaeva a mercenary. "She has nothing to be ashamed of," Felder counters. "They are bullying her. She's gone eight months without support. The city is paying medical bills for a multimillionaire's daughter! The message has to get out that you can't do that. She'll win; the only question is how much." Felder pauses for breath. "What does a girl like this do without a loudmouth like me?"

Actually, Khodaeva seems quite capable of taking care of herself. Outside the courthouse, she dons Versace sunglasses, poses for a *Daily News* photographer, then slides into Felder's black Lincoln Navigator. Riding uptown, he tells me her story. He says that she met Rosen, who'd just bought a cosmetics company, at a modeling audition on September 20, 1995, and soon started seeing him regularly; that they first had sex on July 30, 1997; and that their daughter was conceived in the Parker Meridien Hotel on October 29, 1997. Boggled by the detail, I ask, "How can you

thing very attractive about some women going through divorce."

ROBERT STEPHAN COHEN

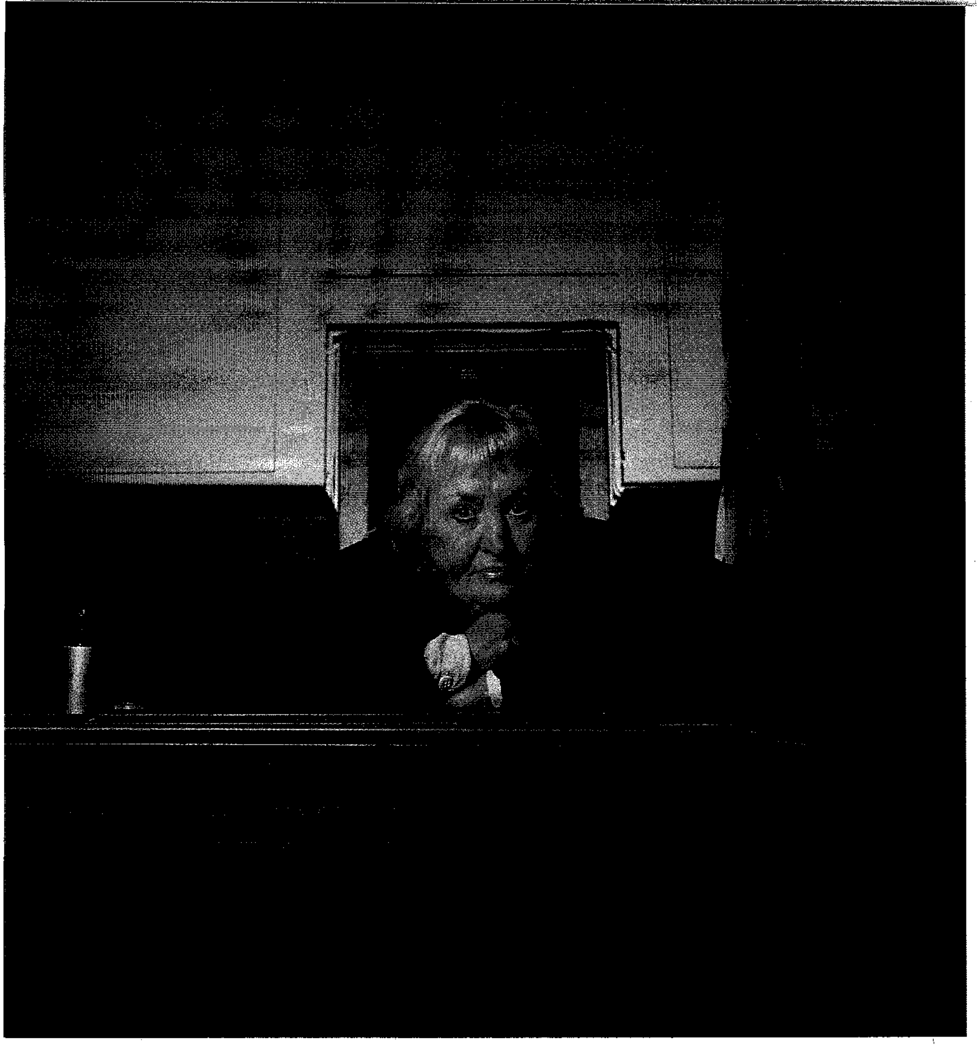
Hourly Rate $450–$500
Provenance Fordham Law. First boss was Roy Cohn. "To be close to somebody like that was very seductive."
Modus Operandi Take no prisoners. "I don't think Bob is in the business of making friends," says Peter Bronstein. Publisher turned agent Joni Evans calls him "my lovable Doberman."
Clients Tommy Mottola, Allen Grubman, Christie Brinkley, Sandy Pittman, Marla Maples, Patricia Duff, Shelby Bryan.
Landmarks Claims victory in *Karp* v. *Karp* because his client, Mr. Karp, lost only 30 percent of his assets.
Low Point Forced to testify about his 1991 affair with Etan Merrick, a client of another lawyer at his firm, in her 1994 divorce from producer David Merrick.
Marital Status Divorced after 22 years from Margery Rubin. She won a settlement and founded DivorceSource, which charges $400 for a two-hour how-to divorce consultation. He remarried in 1998.

Matrimonial Wisdom "I never realized how horrible divorce is until I went through it myself. I certainly don't recommend it, but it made me a better lawyer."

STANFORD LOTWIN

Hourly Rate $450
Provenance Brooklyn Law. Military policeman in Korea.
Modus Operandi Professorial, calming. "He doesn't consider vengeance a good thing for his clients."
Clients Donald Trump, Claudia Cohen Perelman, Warner LeRoy, Joan Lunden, Carl Icahn, Steven Tyler, Vanessa Williams, Diana Ross.
Legal Landmarks After Lillian Goldman reconciled with her husband, Sol, a billionaire developer, she found a letter in his pocket from her lawyer, Roy Cohn, that seems to indicate that he'd been secretly in league with her husband. She sued to overturn the reconciliation agreement. Lotwin represented Sol Goldman—and got the case dismissed. That led to more real-estate clients, which led to Donald Trump. "They all follow Trump," Lotwin says. Fired Patricia Duff as a client, saying, "You're ruining my health."
Worst Moment Suffered a kidney-stone attack in the middle of a divorce hearing.
Marital Status Divorced from his first wife after eighteen years. "It's hard to use the word *amicable*," he says. "I didn't have all that much; I gave her whatever I had."

Photographs, top to bottom: Karen Kuehn/Matrix; Ed Betz/Associated Press; Karen Kuehn/Matrix.



THE TERMINATOR Justice Jacqueline Silbermann in her courtroom.

"THE PEOPLE we want to represent appreciate resolution without destruction. We can divide assets with a scalpel. Judges do it with a cleaver."

be sure?" Khodaeva's husky, accented reply is wrapped in a proud smile. "Because I have diary," she says.

IN A DIVORCE LAWYER'S OFFICE, SUCH revelations are heard every day. "You're sitting at your desk, and in walks a famous artist, an actor, the chairman of a company, and in fifteen minutes, you know their every deep, dark secret and they're dependent on you," says second-generation society lawyer Peter Bronstein. "It gives you great insight into the human condition."

Those insights make divorce lawyers experts at sizing up both their clients and the messes they've gotten themselves into. "You see people at the worst time in their lives," says Bob Cohen. "They have no understanding of the process. The typical investment banker says, 'Get it done,' with no notion that someone on the other side doesn't want it done. Tell me who the other side is and I can suggest when it might get settled, what it might cost, the likelihood that it will be tried."

Though some lawyers are known for their work with one sex or the other—Bob Cohen for men, William Beslow for women—most say they try to keep a balance. Regardless, sex often adds an extra kick to the already volatile mix. Sexual behavior can still be an issue. "Women always want to sue for adultery," says Lotwin. "But adultery is very difficult to prove. So to placate them, you'll have two causes of action, one for cruelty—adultery is cruelty—the other for plain adultery."

Then there's the sexual behavior of divorce lawyers. Sleeping with clients is, of course, highly unethical—which doesn't mean it doesn't happen. "I don't know if I want to fuck you or represent you," one said to a pretty potential client. "Maybe I can do both." Wisely, she chose a third option: neither.

"They're feeling unattractive, unloved, scared, and there's somebody sitting across from them who is going to save them," says Eleanor Alter, Bob Cohen's ferocious female counterpart. "There are men who clearly would like you to be available. But men also come to woman lawyers as someone to confide in. It's hard to talk to another man about your sex life, your insecurities. It's easier to talk to a woman. Maybe it's like Mommy!" Alter laughs, then adds, "I think the most important thing is to pick a good lawyer, not the one who tells you what you want to hear, and to tell your lawyer the truth."

That is, if you know it yourself. One day this fall, an associate of Dominic Barbara, the flamboyant Long Island lawyer best known for representing Mary Jo Buttafuoco, came to court to commence a curious divorce. Two months earlier, their client, a baby-faced investment banker with a wispy beard and a seven-figure income, had dumped his girlfriend of seven years and run off to Vegas to marry a petite, busty Dominican girl—a day after she gave him a lap dance at Scores. It was an expensive gyration—she'd maxed out his credit cards, hocked a ring he'd given her, cracked up his Porsche, and changed the locks on his East Sixties condo after moving her boyfriend in. But that's not the truly odd part: After two hours in court, she'd seduced him all over again with a symphony of sighs, pouts, and sullen stares, gotten $7,500 and a sports-utility vehicle out of him—and then left 60 Centre Street leading him by the hand.

"Was that funny or what?" Barbara blurts out.

FUNNY IS RARE IN DIVORCE COURT, rarest of all in those cases that seem to go on forever. Often, delays are the fault of a spouse who is vengeful ("Fuck the bitch"), emotional ("Screw the bastard"), stubborn, or trying to grind an ex down. Other times, says Felder, "They understand they're going to lose, but they want to make a point." Then there are the "people [who] just can't let go," says Lotwin. Adds Ronald Perelman's petite, chic attorney, Adria Hillman, "Sometimes, they have no other life." These are the cases where husband and wife end up locked in a death grip. "Two scorpions in a bottle," divorce lawyers call them.

That seems to be what's going on this October morning as Justice Jacqueline Silbermann presides over a hearing in the case of actor John Heard and his ex-girlfriend and fellow thespian Melissa Leo, who've been battling over their 12-year-old son for ten years. In the process, Heard lost a bid to gain sole custody after he was arrested, when he returned his son late after a weekend visit and then slapped Leo in front of two policemen. He became a father's-rights advocate, was sentenced to probation and counseling after he made 100 calls to Leo's home over two months, was forced to pay most of Leo's $340,000 legal bill, and ran through twelve lawyers of his own.

In this latest skirmish, over an alleged violation of an order that keeps Heard off the property of the child's school, it's clear that Silbermann is inclined to refuse Leo's badly drafted request; representing herself, she's asking for a contempt ruling against Heard because he'd arrived early to pick the child up for a visit and stepped onto school property to watch him play soccer.

But, ignoring his latest lawyer, Heard refuses Silbermann's gentle request that he swear out an affidavit explaining how innocent his actions were. "You're opening the door for her to write down any allegation and force me to respond!" he yells. "There'll be no end!"

Faced with Heard's obstinacy, Silbermann advises Leo how to perfect her faulty motion, then reads them both the riot act. "There's a little boy here," she scolds. "His name is Jack. Let's litigate less and parent more." In response, Heard keeps shouting. "We're 125 miles away from this child now! Ten years! A million dollars!"

Out in the hall half an hour later, Heard is still screaming.

A ONETIME CORPORATE LAWYER, Silbermann became New York's Administrative Judge for Matrimonial Matters in 1997. Sitting in her robing room, she explains how divorce cases are managed. New York used to consider it a priority to keep people married; now the state's court administration wants cases to end quickly. Forty-five days after a divorce action is filed, a judge is assigned to the matter. Forty-five days after that, "I'm taking charge," Silbermann says.

Small cases generally settle early in the process. In big cases, the judge sets a financial-discovery time line and brings in asset evaluators and a guardian to represent the interests of minor children, paying them out of marital assets "as the judge deems appropriate," Silbermann says. "The good people make a fortune!" She acknowledges the complaints of both lawyers and litigants about court-appointed neutrals, particularly since enhanced earning capacity became a factor in big-money divorces. "It's a big stinky issue with the judges as well," she allows. Silbermann, who wrote the *Golub* v. *Golub* decision, thinks the distribution of intangible assets has gone too far. "Even if Dr. O'Brien had never become a surgeon," she points out, "you can't come back on equitable distribution. There has to be finality."

(Of course, finality is relative. Lately, some moneyed spouses have taken to declaring bankruptcy in order to stay divorce proceedings and wipe out equitable-distribution agreements—although that doesn't work with maintenance or child support.)

"If you're power-hungry," Silbermann says about her job, "there's no better part to be in. Enormous power is vested in a matrimonial judge—and that's only the money. What about the children? Parents get dysfunctional. And the more they spend on litigation, the less there is for little Joseph. Do you want to take from him and give to your lawyers? I have several cases where neither parent is fit to take the kid." She smiles wryly. "So I'm taking them. Do you really want me to raise your child?"

"There's no other area of the law—none—where there is as much discretion," says Eleanor Alter, twirling a bracelet that looks like worry beads in her aerie high above Sixth Avenue. "Even in criminal stuff, you have sentencing guidelines. Here, unless the people settle, the judge gets to decide who gets the kids, how often the other one gets to see the kids, asset division, child support, maintenance, how long a time the moneyed spouse has to pay out, whether the prenuptial agreement is going to be enforced or not! The lawyers are crazed because we don't know anything. Everything is a crap shoot."

But it's so much easier, safer—and more effective—to complain about lawyers than about judges. In 1992, Mark Green, then head of New York's Department of Consumer Affairs, released a scathing report that accused divorce lawyers of a litany of abuses and led to the institution of new rules to protect clients from them (including a ban on sex with clients and on billing clients for discussing fees). But despite Green's urging, judges retained their right to exclude divorcing couples from settlement conferences, though they didn't get additional power to enforce their rulings. So, though no one with any sense says so out loud, behind their hands, lawyers whisper that New York's real problem may be with the bench and the profoundly imperfect laws it is charged with enforcing.

They whisper because complaining out loud has proved disastrous. In summer

Second wife died after twenty-year marriage. Married to third wife, a cabaret singer, for five years.

Matrimonial Wisdom "When divorce lawyers divorce, they become worse than clients. They go yelling and kicking."

WILLIAM S. BESLOW

Hourly Rate $385–$400

Provenance Yale College; Columbia Law.

Modus Operandi Renowned for his cross-examinations, Beslow damaged the credibility of the forensic psychiatrist in *Perelman* v. *Perelman* by forcing her to admit how much of Ronald Perelman's hospitality she'd enjoyed. But he's so overworked, he angers both clients and opponents by his inability to return phone calls. "He's a brilliant lawyer, but he won't hire people and he's never there, so other lawyers get pissed off," says one of them.

Clients Sarah Ferguson, Philip Roth, Tatum O'Neal, Glenn Close, Mia Farrow, Marla Maples, Demi Moore, Leba Icahn, Mary McFadden, Judith Regan, Patricia Duff, Michael Price, Warren Edwards, Laura Day, Wesley Snipes, Robert De Niro.

Legal Landmarks "The best results are complicated matters resolved out of court without publicity."

Worst Moment Patricia Duff's decision not to proceed with the settlement he was on the verge of completing in her divorce from Ronald Perelman.

Marital Status Still with his first wife after 29 years.

Matrimonial Wisdom "Matrimonial law is not challenging. You don't need to be intellectually gifted to schmooze. And people with emotional imbalances can act them out in their everyday work. You can't do that in corporate or tax law."

ELEANOR B. ALTER

Hourly Rate $450

Provenance Harvard Law and Columbia Law.

Modus Operandi Smart and ferocious, she is faulted only for overidentifying with her clients. "There's no room for doubt; her clients are right, and if you oppose them, you're scum."

Clients She was Patricia Duff's first and third lawyer; Mia Farrow, Joy Silverman.

Legal Landmarks Mia Farrow's custody battle with Woody Allen. "He took everything—two of her daughters, her career; he was her lover. That was the worst I've ever seen. We got the decision, but I don't think anybody won."

Low Points The husband of her first divorce

Photographs, top to bottom: Karen Kuehn/Matrix; Bruce Cottler/Associated Press; Kevork Djansezian/Associated Press.

"MY FRIENDS JOKE, 'Is business good?' says Robert Cohen. "We do a dirty business, but we change people's lives for the better."

1995, lawyers from the local chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, including Norman Sheresky, Eleanor Alter, and Bob Cohen, complained that Phyllis Gangel-Jacobs, an opinionated divorce lawyer turned judge, was biased against husbands. "She made no bones about having an agenda; she wanted to protect women," one lawyer says. Adds another, "If you represented a husband, you knew you were deep in a ditch and you would try desperately to settle." Thirty-nine other lawyers promptly signed a letter supporting her, and the revolt resulted in a slap at the uppity lawyers: Three judges—including two the lawyers liked—were replaced.

High-end divorce regularly involves controlling people who've lost control of their lives to judges and mightily resent it. Divorce lawyers savor a remark attributed to a judge who worked on one of Ronald Perelman's three divorce actions. "This man is worth $6 billion," he supposedly said, "but if he wants to piss, he needs my permission."

THAT'S WHY A GOOD LAWYER WILL always press for settlement—even if it means contradicting clients or playing a waiting game until they're ready to listen. "All day long I tell guys, write her a check," says Norman Sheresky, in his signature bemused whisper. "They say, 'I'd rather pay you.' Hundreds of thousands of dollars later, they say, 'Give me the pen.' " Bob Cohen goes so far as to claim that he makes more money settling. "There's somebody else right behind you," he says. "And if I do it relatively quickly, I can get a success fee in excess of billable hours." Adds David Aronson, "The people we want to represent appreciate resolution without destruction." Not only that: "We can divide assets with a scalpel. Judges do it with a cleaver."

"I have a case now where the father of a child is so angry at the mother for not marrying him that he has spent nineteen days on trial over whether the child support should be $1,900 a month or $1,000 a month," says Beslow, a weight-lifting Yalie with a self-confidence bordering on arrogance. "He has now incurred in counsel fees more than the difference he would have paid for the rest of his daughter's minority." Beslow grimaces at the thought of all the money he's made. "It's a very expensive way to act out one's anger."

Reluctantly, lawyers will admit that they can be obstructive, too. Some hide their deficiencies by being ornery. Others overlitigate and churn motions to generate fees. Whether they need the money to pay their overhead or are simply greedy, says Beslow, "there's a built-in incentive to keep litigation going by either purposely misadvising clients or *telling them what they want to hear*, which solidifies the relationship but ensures conflict."

BUT USUALLY, THEY BLAME THEIR clients. Promised anonymity, several of Patricia Duff's former lawyers say she's walked away from acceptable settlement offers. Duff angrily insists that's not the case. "It's insane for anyone to think I don't want to settle. I'd walk away in a minute if I could be free from the anxiety of constant litigation hanging over my head and from the fear of wrenching interference in my mothering of [daughter] Caleigh. But there's an inherent conflict for the lawyers: What's best for the client is not necessarily best for them."

Duff has been around the block with twenty lawyers ("represent[ing] the cream, the milk, and the skim milk of the matrimonial bar," as Justice Franklin Weissberg put it in court one day) in three years of grinding litigation and has been branded—divorce insiders call her type "disgruntled ex-spouses"—as a result. "How can you represent someone who doesn't trust you?" one lawyer says. "She'd listen, go home, and change her mind. Who is to blame but the lawyers? It's too bad, because there's no way Perelman can win custody, but she can lose it."

Styling by Nicole Di Miceli. Hair and makeup by Marina Vance. Models: NMK Agency. Red top and panties by Only Hearts; white tank top and pajamas by Brooks Brothers. Black lawyer's suit by Hickey Freeman; shirt by Brooks Brothers; shoes by Hermès; tie by Paul Stuart. White lawyer's suit by Paul Stuart; shirt by Hickey Freeman; tie by Thomas Pink; shoes by Emporio Armani.

That attitude infuriates Duff. “You’re the problem,” she says, “even if they’re slipshod” or “intimidated,” or they “sit on your case,” or “don’t answer your calls,” or “don’t explain things,” or “default,” or “just quit,” she says. “All that has happened to me. There is zero accountability.”

PATRICIA DUFF’S ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH household parity with Ronald Perelman is being watched carefully by divorce buffs. Duff, a multimillionaire herself, is testing the limits of a law that takes a curious view of Manhattan reality. It considers a high-income couple to be one that earns more than $80,000 annually. And it says children should not suffer from divorce—should not, in other words, be faced with a choice between Christmas at a mother’s mean little ski house at Mt. Snow and a father’s sumptuous chalet in Vail.

Duff’s demands for such things as a $19,500 antique desk for her daughter—which she admits were drawn up hastily and not carefully reviewed—are quite controversial. Feminist divorce lawyer Harriet Newman Cohen, an unabashed supporter of all the various legal mechanisms—from equitable distribution to enhanced earnings—invented to protect women in divorce, thinks Duff should get all she’s after, including “very, very substantial child support,” “the nannies that she needs, her traveling, her clothing,” and “a townhouse”—“and she certainly ought to have a chauffeur-driven car as well. I think that she’s entitled to it.”

Others have their doubts. Some divorce professionals consider Duff’s demands an attempt to win disguised maintenance. Others just think she’s gone too far. “When is enough enough?” asks Lotwin. For now, the law doesn’t say.

The system is simply not set up to deal with someone with the will and the funds to prolong a divorce. “Rich people have the capacity to manipulate it in ways others do not,” says Beslow. And according to Duff, that’s her husband. “I wanted a very simple, elegant agreement, and he kept adding things and adding things, pages of detail that made me uncomfortable,” she says. “It’s typical corporate litigation: Bury your opponent in paper and problems and issues. And I can’t stop it. When you have somebody who wants to settle scores and has the resources to do so, this system invites, encourages, and rewards it.”

The world knows about how rich Ron Perelman is, since Revlon is a public company; but the most complex issue in most divorces is to figure out just how many marital assets there are to divide. Divorce lawyers say *they* never help clients hide money but add that others do; trusts-and-estates lawyers protect assets for a living. “You worry about offshore accounts, and you look for paper trails,” says Lotwin. “You look at how they lived and what they spent, not the tax return.” Often, when the moneyed spouse has hidden assets, the other party either knows about or has benefited from them. It’s another compelling incentive to settle when both spouses are parties to tax fraud. Says Bronstein, “Most would rather see their wife and children get their money than the government.”

Bronstein once saw a couple he’d helped divorce walking hand-in-hand down 57th Street three years later. The husband, he surmised, had protected his assets—whether from the government or from creditors, Bronstein wasn’t certain—by bestowing them on his wife in a sham divorce. It was a rare happy ending in the annals of Splitsville.

The ending of a divorce, however, is often the beginning of another mess, one in which divorce lawyers have a personal stake. “We get stiffed an enormous amount,” says Eleanor Alter, “even when we win. For every client who says they were worked by a lawyer, lawyers have ten clients who haven’t paid. We’re a one-shot deal. They don’t need you again.”

“They’ll say ‘I used so-and-so,’ ” says Felder. “It’s not a casual use of the word.”

AT A RECENT BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR A wealthy East Sider, Bob Cohen looked around the room and observed that he’d played a role in the lives of half the guests. When he got to his table, he discovered that the woman who’d been seated next to him had broken into tears when she’d seen that her dinner partner was to be the man who represented her husband in their divorce. Another woman volunteered for the hot seat; he’d represented her husband, too, but the wounds were not so fresh. “At a table for ten,” Cohen boasted, with just a touch of rue in his voice, “I’d done five divorces.”

Divorce lawyers are jackals, outsiders. They know too much about us, and little of it is pleasant. They help us in our times of greatest need, but they also prey on our misfortunes. And they know this. “My friends joke, ‘Is business good?” Cohen says. “We do a dirty business, but we change people’s lives for the better.”

“We’re a collection of caring, bright do-gooders who want everyone to love us,” says Norman Sheresky. “But we’re also voyeurs and mischievous thieves who take advantage of the unsuspecting and make money because our clients are angry, hurt, and greedy.”

Felder, as always, is blunter. “On one level, it’s sleazy,” he says, twisting his face sourly at the very thought of the work that’s made him rich and famous. “On another, I’m not robbing supermarkets.” ▬

client has picketed, stalked, and threatened her since 1973, despite having been arrested twice. “He’s the most stable man in my life,” she jokes.
Marital Status Twice divorced, third-time lucky.
Matrimonial Wisdom “Men will often use money as a weapon; women will use children, which is worse.”

PETER BRONSTEIN

Hourly Rate $525
Provenance University of Virginia Law.
Modus Operandi Discreet, intelligent. “Peter sneaks up on witnesses, reads what they want to say, and gets them to say it his way.”
Clients Julian Schnabel, Jennifer Bartlett, James Earl Jones, Cliff Robertson, Frank Perdue, Bruce Wasserstein, Pelè, Jenny Gucci.

Legal Landmarks Refused to represent Patricia Duff.
Low Points During a meeting with an unhappy couple, the woman took her bamboo-handled purse and smashed her husband with it, spurting blood all over Bronstein’s desk.
Marital Status Married to his first wife for 29 years.
Matrimonial Wisdom “Confession may be good for the soul, but it’s lousy for a marriage.”

BERNARD CLAIR

Hourly Rate $385
Provenance St. John’s Law; was Marvin Mitchelson’s New York local counsel.
Modus Operandi As unpretentious as he is ambitious. “He’s wildly over his head,” sniffs Raoul Felder—who lost to Clair in *Wildenstein* v. *Wildenstein*.
Clients Karen Merrick, Georgette Mosbacher, Carolyne Roehm, Jocelyn Wildenstein, Mrs. Wilbur Ross Jr., Mrs. Shelby Bryan.
Legal Landmarks Custody trial pitting Mac “Dr. John” Rebennack’s lover, Libby Titus, against the father of her daughter, Levon Helm of the Band. Forced Helm to turn over the child. *Maharam* v. *Maharam,* in which negligent transmission of herpes was made grounds for divorce. A paternity case against Imran Khan, the Pakistani politician, soccer star, and son-in-law of the late James Goldsmith.
Low Point Arrested in court and handcuffed for assault on a husband who seemed to be attacking his wife, Clair’s client. Charges were adjourned in contemplation of dismissal. “It did spoil my evening,” he says.
Marital Status Recently separated from his wife.

Photographs, top to bottom: Karen Kuehn/Matrix; Mitch Jacobson/Associated Press; Karen Kuehn/Matrix.

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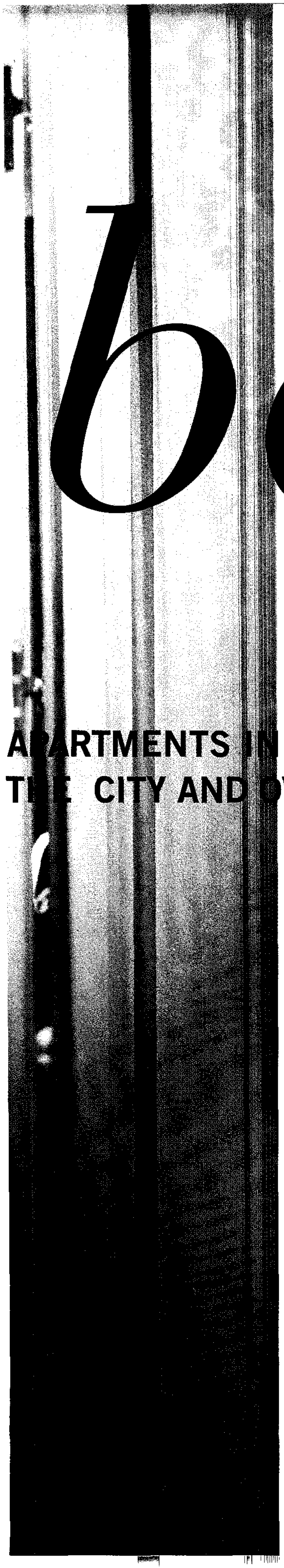
By *Peggy Edersheim Kalb*



barb WIRED

APARTMENTS IN HER LIFE? THE LADY IN RED RUNS THE THE CITY AND OWNS THE MARKET FOR SOUND BITES.

'IS THIS REALLY JAMES? YOU DON'T SOUND LIKE YOURSELF. YOU sound *sexy."* Barbara Corcoran, chairman of the city's second-largest residential-real-estate agency, has just grabbed one of her six phone lines. "How can I help you?" she says with a low chuckle. It's 5:15 P.M., and James Barron of the New York *Times* is the sixth reporter to call Corcoran today about the impending sale of John F. Kennedy Jr.'s TriBeCa loft. Sotheby's, the firm handling the listing, wasn't talking. • "Don't you know someone at Sotheby's?" Corcoran asks senior vice-president and sidekick Scott Durkin, who shares Corcoran's almost bare blond-wood desk. "I'll tell you what I do know," Corcoran tells Barron. "I know that David Letterman lives on the second floor of that very building, and he owns half the floor. And that this apartment is half the top floor, 2,600 square feet. The elevator opens only to that floor. It faces east and north." • "And south," Durkin chimes in. • "North Moore Street is the Fifth Avenue of TriBeCa!" Corcoran crows into the phone. • Barron thanks her for the sound bite. It doesn't matter that Corcoran isn't even handling this exclusive. In her interview that afternoon with *Entertainment Tonight,* Corcoran will again describe this space she's never actually been in and announce the loft's price. "I don't know where I got it. Maybe from the *Post* this morning," she says, laughing. • It's business as usual at the Corcoran Group's Madison Avenue offices. Hours after the Clintons announced they were house-hunting in Westchester, Corcoran had a checklist ready for the First Family that was faxed to every media outlet her group could

Photograph by Silvia Otte

think of. Everyone received a copy but the Clintons themselves, it seems. "It didn't even occur to us," says Corcoran. "And besides, they don't own a newspaper." Two hours later, Corcoran was planted at a desk in CNN's Penn Plaza studio, chatting with Judy Woodruff about Westchester house-hunting on *WorldView*.

"I'm a marketing person, not a real-estate person," says Corcoran, whose powerhouse brokerage doubles as a press-release snow machine, operating on the theory that if you let enough people in on every single thing you've been up to, networks and newspapers will whack a path to your door. And clients will follow.

Corcoran has four public-relations handlers, two full-time, two on retainer, including an old-time Hollywood-style press guy paid $700 per item when he gets the Corcoran Group into the tabloids. But even she finds it hard to keep track of her firm's myriad stunts.

"What icon?" she said on an earlier visit, shooting a glance across the desk at Scott Durkin. A press release touting the new office "icon" had just hit the media's mailboxes, and Durkin reminded her about that twenty-inch-high glass box etched with flowers, fruits, and words like EARTH, POWER, SPACE, HOME, and VISION in what the release referred to as the firm's "sacred space"—really the top of a file cabinet in the corner of the research director's office.

Spiritual kitsch isn't what you expect to find in the cutthroat trenches of today's real-estate market, but Corcoran figures it can't hurt. The *Über*-broker has also been known to call on the services of a professional smudger, referred by Barbara Walters's makeup artist, who waves bells and incense to cleanse a troublesome space of evil spirits. "American Indians used to do it in their tepees," Corcoran notes, fondly remembering an eleven-room Park Avenue spread three years ago that didn't sell until her smudger paid a house call. "The very next morning, a couple sitting on the bed in the master bedroom offered the full $3.2 million asking price," she says.

Corcoran's blue eyes widen in horror as she takes a call from a potential client. He wants her to personally handle his $10 million listing, but by the end of the conversation, Corcoran has gently charmed him into using one of her brokers instead.

It's a good thing, too: The founder and chief executive of the Corcoran Group has sold just three apartments in her life. And yet Barbara Corcoran is the most quoted, most visible Manhattan real-estate agent on the scene today. In her trademark camera-friendly red suit (she now owns twelve of them), Corcoran can be counted on for statistics on million-dollar homes, a mini-dissertation on the newest trends among the "jet set," and an explanation of why LoLIta—Lower Little Italy—is suddenly the "highly hip" neighborhood.

"I find a way to give them what they need. After all," says Corcoran, "the most important thing to a seller is that you be perceived as *big*."

JUST HOW BIG IS SHE? IN 1998, THE Corcoran Group did $1.175 billion in sales volume, solidifying the firm's position as the second-largest residential-real-estate brokerage in Manhattan. And Corcoran says her company is on track to do $2 billion worth of business in 1999 (though industry insiders say that number is a stretch).

Corcoran's also going after venture-capital financing—hoping to raise $7 million by January to bolster her real-estate service on the Internet. There's talk of an IPO somewhere down the line, even though Corcoran admits people have bought only four apartments sight-unseen off the 5-year-old Internet site. Corcoran maintains her brokers get one phone call a day generated by the Web listings. This fall, she signed an agreement with Bamboo.com, meaning Corcoran will be able to offer 360-degree "virtual home tours."

Not that her properties aren't pretty heavily exposed already. A hefty 15 percent chunk of the firm's revenues is diverted into advertising: Barbara spinning a globe on her finger on the TV guide that arrives with the Sunday *Times*. Barbara grinning under that cartoonish Statue of Liberty headdress on the front of her newsletter. Barbara on her Website and in the New York *Observer*, squeezed into a box and wearing a short sleeveless red dress and heels, her arms wrapped tightly around her airbrushed legs.

That one got eyes rolling in real estate's clubby ranks. "We're trying to be taken seriously, and she gets herself photographed in a tight miniskirt," says one female competitor.

Corcoran maintains the compliments outweigh the criticism from those she calls "the uptown ladies." But even brokers at her own firm sometimes wish she'd tone down the shtick: Corcoran's

BARE MARKET **Corcoran scandalized the "uptown ladies" with this newspaper ad.**

old home page—which showed her dressed like a traffic cop under the headline MORE TRAFFIC—"was not at the level of taste of what we're doing," Sharon Baum sniffs.

Two of the city's best-known brokers, Baum and Carrie Chiang, work at the firm; Chiang, known in the business as the "condo queen," operates out of a chauffeur-driven Cadillac; Baum runs her clients around in a black Rolls-Royce. And Corcoran brokers have been in on some high-profile deals—Jerry Seinfeld, Puff Daddy, Giorgio Armani. But the Corcoran Group's image is not nearly as Tiffany-blue as those of such quietly swank boutiques around town as Edward Lee Cave, Alice Mason, and Stribling & Associates. Even the megabrokerage Douglas Elliman somehow carries more cachet, despite the fact that its average 1998 sale ($580,000) was just slightly higher than Corcoran's ($550,000). In contrast, Stribling's average sale was $960,000.

Corcoran insists apartments priced above $1 million represent an estimated 20 percent of the company's business. And though she says she's never felt entirely at ease with the pearls-and-sweater-set gals who have traditionally handled the more lucrative sales, she tries to play the game. "I'm not part of the Upper East Side crowd, and I don't want to be part of it," Corcoran says curtly. "But the Junior

"She's a brilliant marketer. But people in the business do

Photographs: top, courtesy Lorelli Associates; opposite page, courtesy Corcoran Group.

League represents the wives of a lot of old money in town, and as a businessperson, I'd be foolish not to have my fair share of Junior Leaguers in the firm. As long as I have them, I don't have to be that myself."

Corcoran has been luckier scoring high-profile on-site projects downtown—including the Northmoore, the Ice House, and the Bazzini building in TriBeCa—than she has uptown. This year, she ambitiously hired a "celebrity broker," a 26-year-old named Jeffrey Cohen who'd represented the rapper-mogul Puff Daddy when he bought at 817 Park. Cohen was supposed to anchor a "celebrity division." But Cohen left last week, by mutual agreement. "When all was said and done, the only person he knew was Puff Daddy," sneers a source at the firm.

"YOU SHOULD BE IN THIS BUSINESS," CORcoran is telling me at the Corcoran Group's First World Conference of Real Estate Leaders. "You'd make more money. *And* you'd dress better."

Then she turns heel and throws her arm around a graying, middle-aged real-estate broker on his way into Donald Trump's keynote address. Thirty-nine brokers from fifteen countries and fifteen states are milling around the Madison Suite of the Mark Hotel, waiting to hear Barbara Corcoran hold forth on the state of New York real estate. A tour of the "homes of the rich and famous" that will take place the following day includes three active Upper East Side Corcoran Group listings and Donald Trump's own marble-and-gold-plated apartment in Trump Tower. "No other New York agency could have arranged that visit for their guests," Corcoran boasts in one of the ten press releases issued sharp on the heels of the event. The same release noted that the international brokers who attended the event had voted to become part of an "exclusive network" of leading brokers around the world.

Corcoran's ultimate goal? "Well, I reached my first goal, to be the queen of New York real estate," she says. "Now I want to be the queen of international real estate." And if it takes a few lashings of hype, so be it. After all, this is a woman who admits she once told a group of Italian developers she was an ex-nun to clinch a deal.

talk about Barbara's *midwesternness,*" says broker Sarasohn.

BUT WHEN YOU'RE NO. 2, you try harder. "I'm in a limousine getting a ride back to the office, and out the window—on a side street—I see a bald woman with the smoothest skin," Corcoran is saying. "She was like a spirit, wearing a white gown with big feathered wings." Corcoran leaped out of the car and ran after the woman, who'd disappeared into the bistro Le Taxi. The angel was handing out Christian literature and rose petals to distracted Euro-shoppers downing steak-frites when Corcoran caught up with her. "We almost killed a couple people having lunch there, but *we got her*!" she says gleefully. The holy spirit said she never did her thing commercially, but Corcoran took her phone number anyway. "I might walk her around the office sometime," she says. "She'd had cancer, and that kind of success out of failure can be the crux of great salesmanship."

Corcoran is known for such extraordinary motivational tactics, like hiring a street vendor to come upstairs to a meeting and hand out cotton candy. Corcoran's staff thinks she once purposely reversed e-mails sent to two top brokers to stoke competition between them. ("I haven't done that. But I *should*," she says, laughing.) Until recently, she gave out giant yellow horse-show ribbons for what she deemed noteworthy deals. "You got ribbons for going to the bathroom," says a veteran Corcoran broker. "People thought the ribbons weren't classy," says Corcoran, who did away with them even though she thought they worked.

Still, many of her brokers gush about the notes, the e-mails, and the steady stream of flowers she's known to send. Keeping the troops happy is a priority: An entire wall of her offices at 660 Madison Avenue is a giant refrigerator filled with free soda. A masseur gives brokers back rubs at their desks, and an instructor comes in weekly for in-house yoga and meditation classes. And there are plenty of parties. At her "country residence" in Pawling—which is what the converted schoolhouse is routinely labeled in press releases—she has rented an elephant, horse-drawn carriages, and Harley-Davidsons for her crew to tool around on. Her last event was a Cuban pig roast in Pawling for 400 affluent Cuban-Americans. ("Well, I have a Cuban broker.") February's "Sweetheart" party was a black-tie affair at Chelsea Piers for 800.

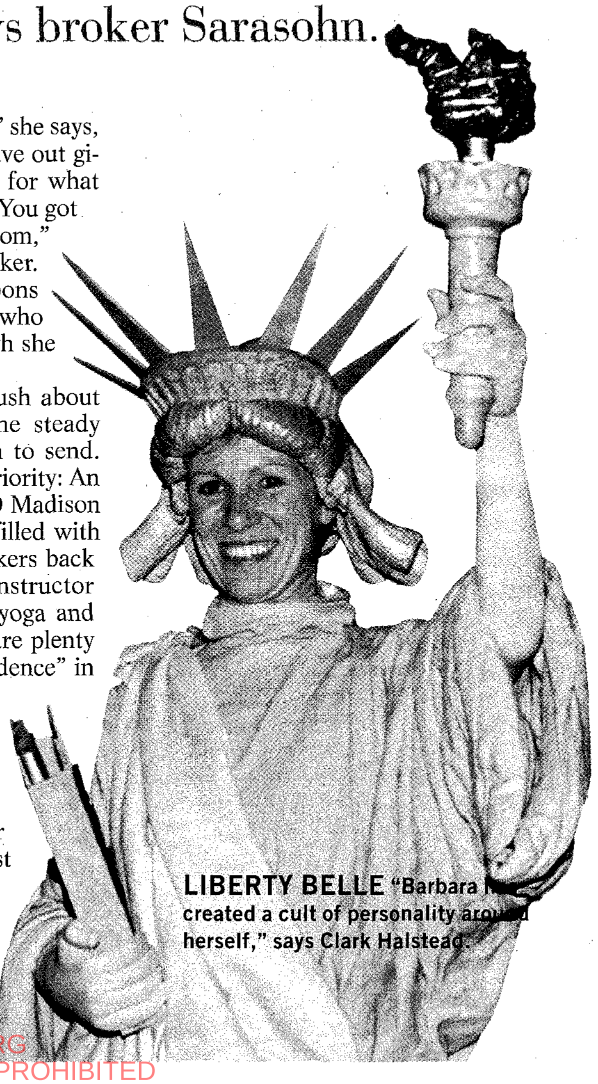
"Barbara's thing is, she has to be adored," says an ex-Corcoran broker who confesses she never could get into the rah-rah spirit of the place. As for Barbara's parties, "it was an unspoken rule that you had to go or you were like an outsider; you weren't a Barbara worshiper."

Within the Corcoran Group, everyone likes to talk about Barbara's "vision."

"What she has done is create a cult of personality around herself," says Halstead Property founder and competitor Clark Halstead. "And some people pass judgment on that."

"She's a brilliant marketer—endearing, engaging, generous," says Corcoran broker Wendy Sarasohn. "But people in the business do talk about Barbara's hokiness—you know, her *midwesternness.*"

CORCORAN ACTUALLY GREW UP IN EDGEWATER, New Jersey, "one mile long, two blocks wide—at the foot of the George Washington Bridge," she says. "There was an aluminum factory there, and that was about it." But she had a tantalizing view of the Manhattan skyline from her bedroom window.



LIBERTY BELLE "Barbara has created a cult of personality around herself," says Clark Halstead.

Corcoran was from a big Irish Catholic family—the second of ten children. Her father managed a printing press but moonlighted as a night watchman. "I was the only one in the family who went to college. St. Thomas Aquinas was right nearby," says Corcoran, "and it was new and unaccredited. I was a charity-D student, but I didn't want to marry, have babies, and stay in Edgewater. The nuns thought I was nice. So they took me."

As a senior in college, Corcoran was waitressing at New Jersey's Fort Lee Diner when she began dating a divorced builder named Ray Simone. Simone was eight years her senior. When she was two years out of school, in 1973—and after stints as a telephone operator and a flower-delivery girl—Simone put up $1,000 to help her get started in the rental real-estate business. In exchange, she handed Simone 51 percent of the business.

With her first commissions from Corcoran Simone, Corcoran went to Bergdorf Goodman and bought a brown-and-white wool herringbone coat, with a big swirly collar and cuffs. "I was working out of my home, so I had clients coming in and out. I suppose it looked odd."

Corcoran was living with two roommates in an apartment on East 86th Street when her landlord served her with an eviction notice. "I went to see the landlord, Johnny Campagna—the most handsome man in New York," Corcoran remembers, "and I asked why I was being evicted. Turns out he thought I was a hooker. That's when I learned my first lesson about image." Corcoran told Campagna she could do a better job renting out his building than the guy who worked for him. "Johnny decided to give me a chance, and so I rented like crazy," says Corcoran. "That building became my bread and butter."

QUEEN B **Clockwise from top, Corcoran and Trump in pre-lawsuit days; at a Hillary Clinton fund-raiser with husband Bill Higgins; charming Michael Douglas in 1997.**

> "Barbara's a little, um, overexuberant in some ways."

Eventually, Corcoran moved in with Simone and his three children in Fort Lee; Simone kept the books for the firm, now ensconced in offices at 14 East 60th Street. Corcoran sold her first apartment in 1977 by chance—to somebody who didn't realize she was a rental broker: "I took my 6 percent commission, came back, and hired my first co-op salesperson." Her timing was impeccable; Corcoran moved into the co-op market just as rental-to-co-op conversions were transforming Manhattan's brokerage business. The economy had started to rebound, and existing co-ops quickly started doubling and tripling in price.

"Then one night that year, Ray Simone told me he had fallen in love with Tina Pogue, ten years my junior and much prettier," says Corcoran, still sounding surprised. Pogue was the head of relocation at the firm.

"Barbara knew what was happening," counters Simone. "One day we were all at the ski house we shared with some friends, and Barbara is following Tina with an ax. We were cutting Christmas trees. I don't think it came as a surprise."

"Ray married Tina," Corcoran continues. "But it was a race to the altar." Corcoran proposed to an advertising executive named Dale Barlow who'd spent time at the same ski house, too. In 1979, she married him. She was 30 and he was 25; it lasted seven years.

Corcoran Simone staggered along for a year after the couple split up. "Then, after a year, Ray was a gentleman and he gave the one percent back; we flipped a coin to divide the assets," says Corcoran.

In 1978, Corcoran started the Corcoran Group, and Simone and Pogue started Pogue Simone. "Years later, he asked me to buy out his business," says Corcoran, "but there really was nothing to buy."

THE CORCORAN GROUP SET UP SHOP WITH twelve brokers and an 1,800-square-foot office on Third Avenue and 58th Street that was only 25 feet wide. Corcoran painted the foyer kelly green. Esther Kaplan became president and is Corcoran's only equity partner: "I got Esther Kaplan in the coin toss," Corcoran remembers.

In 1981, Corcoran decided to issue her first "Corcoran Report" on the state of the condominium market. The firm had made just eleven sales that year, but "no one asked me how many sales it was based on," she says, grinning. "The *Times* just ran with it." She sent it to Donald Trump with a handwritten note before it went out to the press. "Trump Tower was not ranked 1, 2, or 3 on the list," Corcoran remembers, "so he asked me to come in." By the time Corcoran met with him, she says, she had already decided to refigure the numbers on a price-per-square-foot basis. Trump was happy, because Trump Tower and Trump Parc were now Nos. 1 and 2 in the rankings. "He became my friend," laughs Corcoran, "and he took out a full-page ad in the New York *Times* with THE CORCORAN REPORT written across the top."

Photographs, clockwise from top: Diane Baasch Maio; Robert Cumins; courtesy of the Corcoran Group.

"Barbara's a little, um, overexuberant in some ways, but she's a natural promoter and I don't say that in a derogatory sense," says Trump. "She can't help herself."

Corcoran and Trump haven't always seen eye-to-eye. In 1994, Corcoran accused Trump of not paying millions of dollars of commissions to two of her brokers who'd brought him key Hong Kong investors for his Riverside South project. Trump eventually agreed to pay a lower fee, and Corcoran signed a confidentiality agreement, but after Corcoran talked to *New York* Magazine about the deal, he decided to withhold her fee.

"The ink wasn't even dry when I got the call from *New York*," Trump remembers. But in a ruling later upheld by an appeals court, Trump was obliged to pay up.

IT WASN'T THE FIRST TIME CORcoran's zeal to get her name out there got her into trouble. Four years ago, a Corcoran ad that appeared in the New York *Observer* implied that the Corcoran Group was the only agency in town willing to co-broker deals. Every broker in town went ballistic, and Corcoran was actually called before the Real Estate Board's ethics committee. Corcoran pulled the ad, and the charges were dismissed, but her competitors have been slow to forget—especially after mailings containing the same copy and deceptive visuals were sent out by one Corcoran broker after the fracas. "She does not make those kinds of mistakes," says a top broker at another firm. "Everything she does is *extremely* calculated."

When the stock market swooned last year, Corcoran went on ABC, CBS, NBC, and MSNBC to say that deals were unraveling left and right. Corcoran insists that was the truth. But some of her still-furious peers insist she actually contributed to making the market jittery.

says Donald Trump. "But she's a natural promoter. She can't help herself."

Little is off limits: A recent New York *Post* "Living Section" profile of Corcoran's second husband, Bill Higgins—pitched by the Corcoran Group—called him "the most henpecked man in Manhattan." Corcoran and Higgins live in a classic-six co-op on 72nd Street between Lexington and Third. They also share a seven-bedroom contemporary beach house on Fire Island in addition to the Pawling getaway. Higgins, a former FBI agent and New Jersey real-estate broker, is currently marketing "a computer chip—a little black box—that can pick up emotion," says Corcoran. Higgins, who was a captain in the Navy, has also launched a program to sink old Navy barges to help build new barrier reefs. "Bill is interested in everything from quantum mechanics to UFOs," says Corcoran, quickly adding that he's never actually *seen* a UFO.

Higgins has four children from a previous marriage, but five years ago, at the age of 45 and following years of unsuccessful infertility treatments, Corcoran decided she would get pregnant using her youngest sister Florence's eggs. "All my sisters volunteered," says Corcoran, "but Florence has the best brains, the best personality, and the best body." Her son Thomas was born shortly afterward. Corcoran herself is now looking for a bigger apartment—but was outbid on two she wanted in Carnegie Hill. "Now I guess I know what it's like to join the masses," she says.

BROKERS AT COMPETING FIRMS SAY CORcoran has been offering high-end brokers the moon to come join her. Recently, she scored big, wooing Robby Browne and Paul Wexler from Douglas Elliman and Suzanne Hebron from Stribling to be executives. Corcoran is said to also be courting William B. May's Roger Erickson. Industry insiders speculate that in order to keep Carrie Chiang with the company, Corcoran has offered her more than 75 percent of her commissions (compared with an industry average of around 60 percent). Corcoran admits she gives away the store when negotiating with top brokers.

Corcoran's aggressive recruiting tactics have also raised eyebrows. "When Barbara invited us to the opening party at her Madison Avenue headquarters, she told us to bring our brokers, then tried to hire them away," says one competitor. "Barbara had assigned her brokers to tail us like sheepdogs," says another. Not long after the party, seven Halstead brokers moved over to the Corcoran Group.

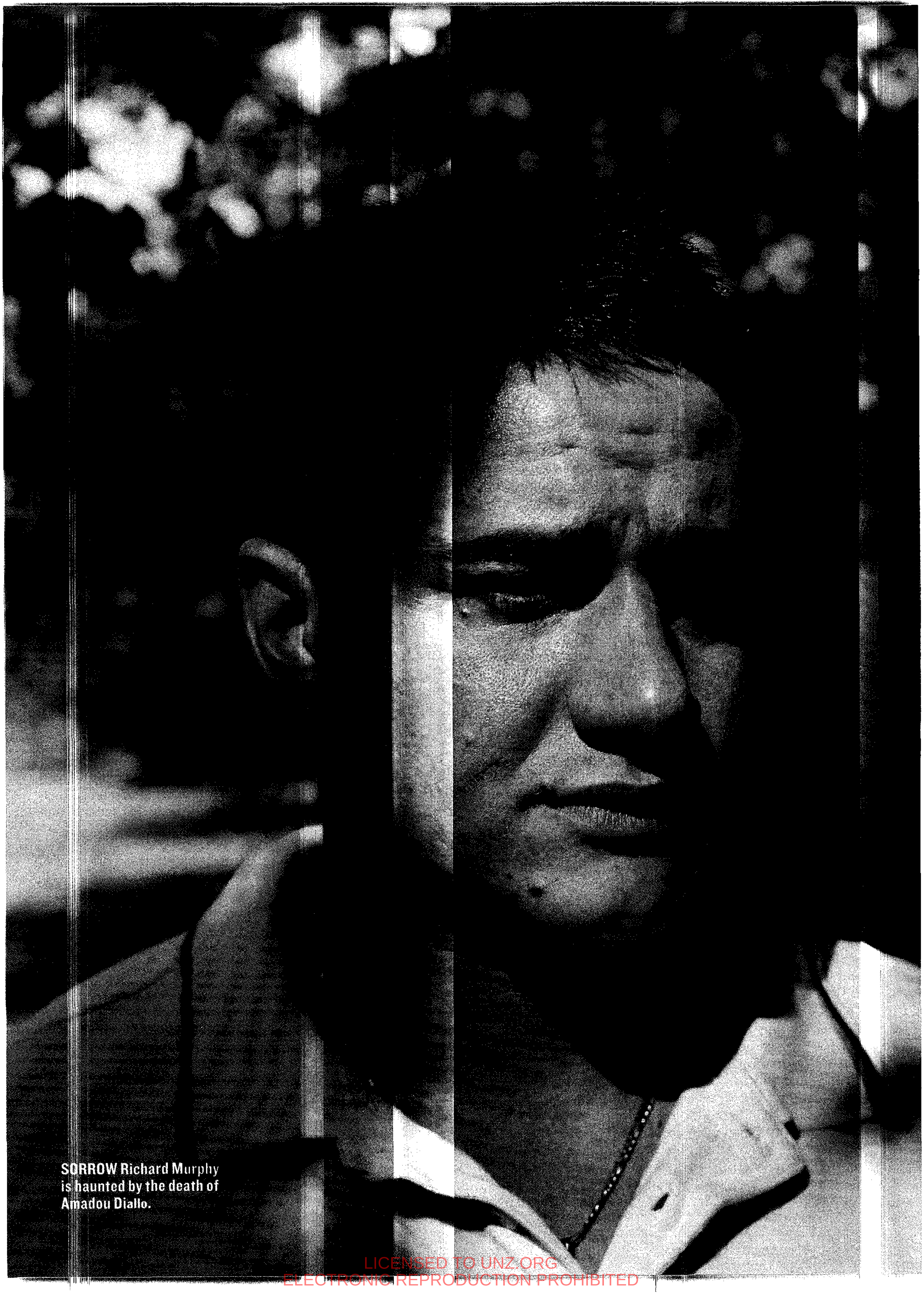
Corcoran will never forget that her brokers are her capital. In October 1987, Corcoran's firm grew from 12 agents to 35 and she moved into 5,500 square feet at 645 Madison Avenue. Almost on cue, the market crashed. The phone stopped ringing, and the condo boom lost its helium. Broker Freda Green, who almost merged with Corcoran in the early nineties, says her accountants told her to stay far away. Corcoran was forced to mortgage her Pawling house, sell her one-bedroom co-op, and start teaching real-estate courses at New York University and Marymount Manhattan College for extra money.

Carrie Chiang was a fledgling broker with J.I. Sopher whose first big deal was a $2.9 million sale to the Taiwan Mission. In 1986, the Shanghai-born broker chased Corcoran into a nearby deli after hearing one of her NYU lectures, and Corcoran offered the four-foot-eleven dynamo a job. Many believe that Chiang's connections and subsequent earnings proved enough to tide Corcoran over.

Then, in the winter of 1991, Corcoran got a call from developer Bernie Mendik: 263 apartments in seventeen postwar buildings around Manhattan just weren't selling. They were "the dregs of the earth," says Corcoran—small and overpriced. Mendik asked Corcoran if she would take them on. The Corcoran Group slashed prices on all the apartments and announced through their brokers that they would be sold on a first-come-first-served basis in a one-day sale. The doors at each unit opened at nine o'clock, and people were lined up outside. Corcoran sold 101 apartments that day. Within four months, all the units had sold, and the Corcoran Group had taken in $1 million in commissions.

Over the past nine years, Corcoran has opened three more offices, bringing the total number of brokers to 455. In 1998, she absorbed Brooklyn Landmark's three Brooklyn offices. Two years ago, Corcoran took 24,000 square feet of space at 660 Madison, one of the avenue's toniest office buildings. Colleagues wonder how she might weather a downturn, what with the rent she must be paying. After all, many of Corcoran's competitors—Douglas Elliman (bought out by national commercial-real-estate brokerage Insignia this summer and No. 1 in the field), Brown Harris, Halstead, and Prudential ML Kay—have cash behind them that could be used to prop them up if the market sours; Corcoran says she's trying not to worry about that.

"NO, I'M SORRY," CORCORAN TELLS THE SEVenth reporter on the line asking about the JFK Jr. apartment. "We can't get *Inside Edition*'s camera crew in for a tour. I can talk about it, but I'm not the listing agent. No, Sotheby's has the listing. No, I can't get you in. I wish I could. I'll give you their number, but I'm delighted to help any way I can. And yes, if someone wants to *buy* the apartment, they can definitely do it through us." ■



SORROW Richard Murphy is haunted by the death of Amadou Diallo.

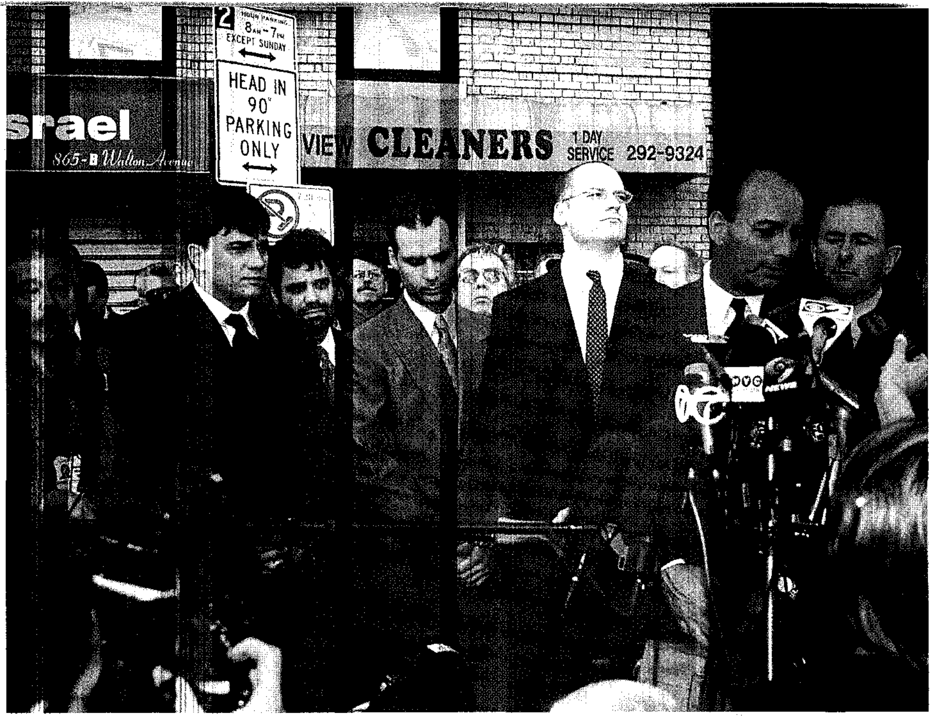
Richard Murphy was known as an exemplary cop—until last February, when he and three partners fired 41 bullets at Amadou Diallo. With the murder trial starting next month, Murphy tells his story.

the SHOOTER

IN HIS FIVE MONTHS IN THE STREET CRIME UNIT, POLICE OFFICER RICHARD Murphy had personally taken five guns off the street and helped remove perhaps fifteen more. He'd also survived two encounters in which he had narrowly missed being injured—or killed. Though the 26-year-old cop had made 55 felony arrests during his five-year career on the NYPD, Murphy had never received a single Civilian Complaint Review Board citation—a significant measure of the manner—and attitude—in which he approached his work. • "Fifty-five felony arrests with no CCRBs—that's better than 85 to 90 percent of cops," says former NYPD chief of department (and notorious hard-liner) Louis Anemone. "That's extremely professional." To another NYPD veteran, Murphy's lack of CCRBs suggests that "he's a 'people person,' 'cause if you're a new cop, you'll get a complaint in your first ten arrests." • Like 90 percent of his colleagues, Murphy had also never discharged his weapon, though he'd had plenty of opportunities. Steve Brandow, his partner at the 115th Precinct in Queens, once watched as Murphy showed "tremendous restraint" in a situation in which "most other officers probably would have fired and been justified by department guidelines for doing so." • "Ever since I became a cop," Murphy says, "I prayed I'd never, ever have to use my gun. That was my goal—to get through my whole career without firing." • All that changed in the early-morning hours of February 4, 1999, when Murphy and three other Street Crime Unit cops—Sean Carroll, Edward McMellon, and Kenneth Boss—had an encounter with Amadou Diallo that cost an unarmed man his life and sparked the biggest outburst of anti-police sentiment the city has seen in recent years. Forty-one bullets were fired at Diallo, four of them from Murphy's gun. Nineteen struck him. The 22-year-old middle-class Guinean with the gentle smile, a devout Muslim who planned to enroll in college, died from wounds to his chest, left side, left back, right arm, and legs that caused ruptures of the aor-

BY SHEILA WELLER

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANA LIXENBERG



ta, spinal cord, lungs, liver, spleen, kidney, and intestines.

For many, the Diallo shooting, like the station-house torture of Abner Louima, personified police brutality in a city whose cops seem to have been given freer and freer rein. Congressman Charles Rangel's declamation "If this had been a horse that had been shot by 41 bullets, there would be more outrage" typified the anger the incident provoked. During fifteen days of protests organized by the Reverend Al Sharpton at One Police Plaza, distinguished citizens, congressmen, celebrities, State Comptroller Carl McCall, former mayor David Dinkins, and ordinary New Yorkers—some 1,200 people in all—arranged to get briefly arrested, to demand the officers' arraignment. On March 31, the day the downtown protests ceased, Carroll, Boss, McMellon, and Murphy were all charged with two counts of second-degree murder and one charge of reckless endangerment.

These are among the harshest indictments ever meted out to police officers. The severity was partly due to the fact that they had declined to testify before the grand jury (which never heard their side of the story). But even those who'd expected murder indictments were surprised that Bronx District Attorney Robert Johnson added a second charge—of murder "with intent"—that is almost never applied to police officers. (New York *Times* columnist Bob Herbert, as vigilant a police watchdog as one could want, had called it not a deliberate attack on a known innocent but a "hideous mistake" by cops who perceived themselves in danger.)

Moreover, the indictments stuck: On September 29, declaring that "there is sufficient evidence for every charge," presiding justice Patricia Anne Williams turned down defense requests to dismiss the indictments. If convicted, the four cops could get life sentences. The trial is set to begin January 3.

Many who mourn Amadou Diallo see his death in stark racial terms. But for Richard Murphy, for the cops who worked with him in the 115th Precinct in Queens, for people who grew up with him in College Point, for veteran officers intimate with the workings of the Street Crime Unit, the tragedy was never a matter of black and white, literally or figuratively. And while the city has demanded justice in this case, New Yorkers know almost nothing about the four officers who fired their guns on February 4 and became the "Diallo cops." Richard Murphy is the first to break their silence. This is his story.

THE PHONE WOKE SHARON MURPHY AT 5:30 A.M., one hour before she, her husband, and their two-month-old son were planning to leave for Vermont. "Normally Rich would say, 'I got a collar; I'm gonna be home late,' but this time he said he didn't know when he'd be home," Sharon, 27, recalls. "His voice was really shaky." Unable to sleep, Sharon beeped Rich, but he didn't call back, which was extremely unusual. She paged him a second time, still to no avail. He finally called at 9:30. Vermont was off. "I can't talk about it," he said, still sounding shaken. "There was a shooting, and—the guy's dead. Just take that for an answer."

As a cop's wife, Sharon—who has her own career as an accountant—had braced herself for many awful scenarios, but nothing comparable to the one she saw when she turned on New York 1 just after noon: In the vestibule of an apartment building at 1157 Wheeler Avenue, in the Soundview section of the Bronx, at about 12:40 A.M., a West African street vendor had been killed by the police in a hail of bullets. Three more hours went by with no phone call. "At about 4, 4:30, he walked through the door," Sharon remembers. "Pale as a ghost. He looked horrible, like a zombie. I flew over to him. I said, 'Is that you? Are you one of them?' He sat down on the couch. He couldn't even talk. He just nodded."

WHEN I FIRST VISIT THE MURPHYS, in July, Richard is wearing shorts and a blue T-shirt from the 115, which doesn't quite hide the fifteen pounds he's packed on from nervous eating since February. He's been working nights answering the phones and doing desk work—standard post-suspension modified duty—in a nearby basement NYPD electronics shop, so he gets to spend days with his wife and son, Robert Moses.

Sharon had been strongly opposed to her husband's joining the dangerous Street Crime Unit. She remembers "getting sarcastic—'You think you'll make a difference?'—and crying hysterically," she tells me. But the unit was significantly responsible for reducing shootings in the city from 2,500 in the first half of 1993 to fewer than 1,000 over the same period in 1998. "I just tried to make her understand," Richard says. "Two thousand guns off the street a year is helping people." Sharon reconsidered. "I was a happy workaholic; I had my career. So if he wanted to further himself and make a difference, did I have the right to stop him? So I said, 'I really, *really* don't want you to do it. But if you're gonna be miserable not doing it, do it.' I thought he'd say, 'All right, I'll pull my application.' He didn't."

Photographs: clockwise from top, Fred Phillips/Impact Visuals; Porter Gifford/Gamma Liaison; Bill Biggart/Impact Visuals.

The Murphys' two-bedroom duplex is in a large, diverse Queens development about equal parts East and South Asian, black and Hispanic, and white. The white-porticoed redbrick is on a square of identical houses facing a tree-studded central lawn, like dorms in a university quad. The living room has pillow-piled Seaman's couches, a smoked-glass coffee table and entertainment unit, and two large photographs of the couple at their September 1996 wedding.

PROTEST **In the wake of the shooting, clockwise from below, Susan Sarandon at One Police Plaza in March; Al Sharpton with Diallo's parents at the funeral in February; Murphy, Boss, McMellon, and lawyer at the arraignment on March 31.**

Murphy's credulous face, framed by a spiky dark thatch of half-grown-out summer crew cut, seems younger than his 26 years, yet he exudes a wintry melancholy. He talks like a street kid—dropped *g's*, flat affect—but his gestures (he squints, looks off, rakes his fingers through his hair as he answers questions) betray his thoughtfulness. On a chain around his neck hangs a gold Star of David with a crucifix inside, a symbol of his marriage.

"THEY'RE SCAPEGOATS."

Eric Adams, spokesman for a black police officers' group, says of the Diallo cops. "The people on trial are the wrong people on trial."

Sharon Gutnik Murphy, in white tee and khaki slacks, is as lanky and effervescent as her husband is panda-like; her silky ginger hair streams down her back. Though Hebrew was her first language, her mid-Island speaking voice resembles Mariah Carey's. After the shooting, they talked about writing Amadou Diallo's parents a letter but were advised not to do so. Why didn't they speak out immediately to a city that needed to hear what they had to say? "Richard adamantly didn't want people to think he wants them to feel sorry for him," Sharon says. "We didn't want to put the focus on us instead of where the sympathy belongs, on Diallo's family." Then she adds, "We didn't want Al Sharpton to say, 'Look at that pathetic couple, trying to draw attention to themselves.' "

"I feel terrible for the Diallo family," Murphy says. "We all do. There's not one of us who doesn't. I wouldn't want anybody to have to go through that. I understand their pain. *No*"—he's caught himself sounding presumptuous—"I don't understand their pain; I don't think anybody can truly understand their pain. But I truly feel for their pain. And I can understand why they're upset. I can't say enough how bad I feel. I feel terrible that this had to happen."

The words *had to happen* are significant, of course. Murphy insists that he was justified in firing his gun that night. The officers' version of events hinges on their belief that Diallo might have been the multiple rapist they were looking for (that man, Isaac Jones, was arrested in early April, and confessed to 4 of what may be a total of 51 rapes), and their mistaken perception that he was armed. When Diallo drew what turned out to be his wallet from his pocket, Carroll shouted, "Gun! He's got a gun!" And when McMellon fell backward off a stoop step, his partners thought he'd been shot.

"Are the Diallo cops bad guys?" I ask veteran policeman Lieutenant Eric Adams, spokesman for 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care and frequent critic of Mayor Giuliani's police policy. "Have you heard anything bad about them? Personally? As officers?" If anyone had, it would be Adams, who sponsored African-American ex–Street Crime cop Yvette Walton's testimony on the subject of racial profiling at the New York Civil Liberties Union hearings last spring. Adams has spoken out against the Street Crime Unit's intensive stop-and-frisks in minority communities, as well as against the unit's historical lack of accountability to the local precincts it enters (in October, Commissioner Safir decentralized the unit), and he has pointedly wondered aloud why white cops in black communities are "in such a hurry."

Nevertheless, in answer to my questions, Adams says, "No, they're not bad guys.

"These four officers could have been any four Street Crime officers in the city, given the atmosphere that existed in an administration where there's a marriage between City Hall and One Police Plaza," Adams continues. "These four have to stand trial, because they did the act, but in a larger sense they're scapegoats. They were heroes before the Diallo shooting; overnight they became villains, and the generals who gave them marching orders are left untarnished. The people on trial are the wrong people on trial."

RICHARD MURPHY GREW UP IN COLLEGE Point, Queens, the second of four children of an Italian-German housewife and an Italian-Irish fireman. On his father's side, virtually all the men for three generations had been cops or firemen. The Italian culture was dominant; when he was growing up, life was "big dinners after church on Sunday," Murphy recalls, and demonstrative affection. What was notable to Richard's first-grade teacher, Stephanie Herbert, who became a family friend, is "how you would see Richard, as an adult, and his father hugging—many times. You don't always see a father and son like that. It is an extremely loving family. And Richie lived at home until he got married—today, that's unusual."

Richard Murphy Sr. spent nineteen years (eight in the South Bronx, eleven in Harlem), responding to warehouse arsons and pulling kids out of infernos. "I left the fires at the firehouse," he says. "At home, we never talked about them—it was just me and my family. Rich just knew when he was growing up that I was part of a tremendous family of good people. He's seen great men, growin' up."

Richard Sr.'s appreciation of the more politically unambiguous heroism of firefighting compared with crime-fighting is what made him want to guide his son into the NYFD. Richard Sr.'s own experience had taught him that the cops have it harder. "I worked together with cops in the worst neighborhoods in the city. It's more dangerous to be out on the street eight hours a day. The fire truck backed into the firehouse and that door shut. It's an island. It's refuge. Cops didn't have that."

One Hundred Twenty-fifth Street in College Point in the seventies and eighties was also a refuge. The neighborhood was self-sufficient. "Everything was right there," says Murphy's close friend George Faller, a sanitation worker's son. "Our church, St. Fidelis, was up the block; St. Fidelis School, where we went, was right next to it; the park where we played—it was all there. All our friends were on the block. Richie and I would play Dungeons & Dragons and read fantasy books like Tolkien and Robert Jordan. And we'd always talk about God and spirituality."

They went to St. Fidelis every Sunday, long after most of the other neighborhood kids had stopped. "Rich and I were both searching for an intimate connection with God," Faller says. "There's not too many guys you can talk to about that. We'd climb trees and get in nature and ask each other: 'Who is He? What kinda God is He?' We've had these conversations pretty much nonstop since I was 8. I always believed in more of a loving God—just be a good person and things will take care of themselves. Rich would talk about reading the Old Testament and how God there is very specific and strict, a vengeful God."

Today Murphy's theology is catholic, small *c*—he's reading about Buddhism and has been practicing Tai Chi for three years with a Chinese master in Chinatown. "I think God looks into our hearts and can tell if you're a good person," he says. "It's not like you have to be christened or you won't go to Heaven; I don't believe that anymore."

Fighting was part of life in College Point. "It was a tough Irish-German neighborhood," Murphy says. "If you disrespected someone, that was how you settled it."

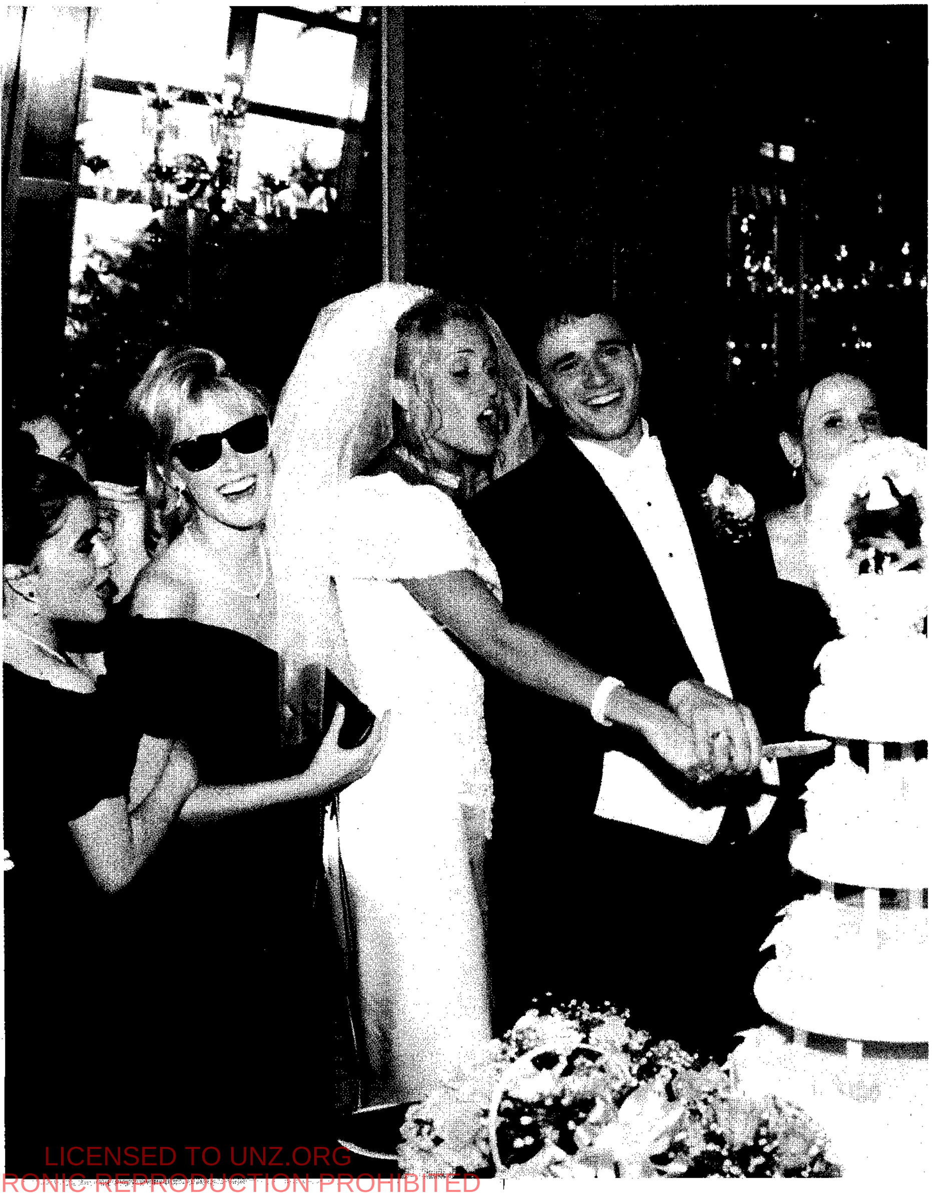
"Where we lived, you didn't let anyone push you around," Faller says. Yet he and Murphy were also fascinated with nonviolence. "We talked about Gandhi and Jesus and Martin Luther King," Faller continues. "Right behind my house was a synagogue. We used to go after football and sit under the big tree in its open yard. Once we were there, talking about Bernhard Goetz. Here's a guy who had enough and finally fought back. I told Rich I always thought if I was black I would be a Black Panther—'cause of all the injustice, I'd want to fight back. Rich disagreed. He said, 'Yeah, but look at the results of Martin Luther King. He achieved more than anybody did, without violence.' "

"Relationships always seemed to be very important to Rich," says Stephanie Herbert, who continued to observe him in the halls of St. Fidelis. He was a fair student, never college-minded at a time when a lot of the neighborhood boys were set to go. "I don't know why that was," Herbert says. "He was always floating around with a book in his hand." He entered Holy Cross High School, but "to stay here you have to be highly motivated academically," his guidance counselor there, Tom Pugh, says, "and Rich was one of the ones that get motivated later." He transferred to Flushing High. With friend Donald Zuvich (now a teacher), he volunteered as a kids' sports mentor at the local Poppenhusen Institute. Murphy, Zuvich, Faller, and Faller's brother played hockey, football, and baseball and listened to Nirvana, Metallica, and Pearl Jam.

In the summer of 1987, David Woods, the catcher on Rich's Holy Cross baseball team, was stabbed to death when, after seeing a girl in the neighborhood crying, he went to a park and confronted the boy she said had slapped her. Richard was devastated. "David was a special kid," Pugh remembers. "His parents were hearing-impaired; he could sign. He was an outstanding saxophone player, a 90-plus student. And the boy who killed him had never been in trouble before." "Rich learned," his father says, "that this is all for keeps."

Rich Murphy graduated from the police academy in September 1994 and stayed in Queens, where he was assigned to the 115. During the four and a half years Murphy was there, the 115 almost consistently fell within the top half of the city's civilian-complaint-prone precincts. Yet Murphy himself was never cited for anything but his first-class work.

A LOT OF THE COPS WHO WORKED with Rich Murphy at the 115 feel that what happened to him could have happened to any of them. "Unfortunately, we're judged by a decision we make in a fraction of a second," says Murphy's mentor, Steven Brandow, whose young priest's face and earnest manner belie the fact that he's a thirteen-year veteran, nine of those years in the Bronx. "If I was in his shoes that night, I'm scared to say it, but I might have act-



MIXED MARRIAGE Richard and Sharon at their part-Jewish, part-Christian wedding (opposite), and when they were dating.

"YES, I'M SCARED," Murphy admits. "We're all scared. It's like livin' with an anvil on your shoulder."

ed the same way. And I'm a cop who's done 300 arrests and never had to resort to deadly physical force. But I know for a fact Rich Murphy didn't wake up that morning saying, 'I'm gonna shoot somebody.' I have the greatest respect for him—his skilled tactics, the sensitive way he interacts with crime victims, his communication skills with people on the street. He has a carin' heart. He treats others the way he would want others to treat him. He was by far one of the best officers I worked with."

Murphy was known as a "positive guy," says Jamie Giambron, a short, round-cheeked officer who, in the red football jersey he's wearing on plainclothes detail, looks like a high-school senior. "Once, a bunch of us went to Baltimore for a Yankees game; a couple of the guys had too much to drink and got into a fight and Rich was, like, the focal point of breaking it up. Even when he played hockey—and we played *rough* hockey—I never seen him get violent. And you'd see the other guys goin' crazy."

Murphy walked a beat in C-Pop (community policing) with a black partner. "Rich and I were buddies," says that officer, who requested that his name not be used. "He helped me move into my house. We hung out a couple of times. Richie had a lot of respect for people."

On patrol, "Rich would use his sense of humor as part of his thick skin," Brandow says. "Somebody was drunk and said the F-word and gave him the finger—he'd laugh, just brush it off. And Rich would use 'verbal tone,' which means in an arrest situation, he gets what he wants without using any type of force." Murphy was what is known as an "active" cop; he wanted what cops call "quality" arrests, the "index crimes"—robbery, burglary, rape, grand-larceny auto, felony assault, felony weapons offenses.

"Rich's whole aspiration was gettin' bad guys," says Brian McConville, a muscled, fast-talking David Duchovny look-alike. "Not writin' $55 tickets for people who park in front of a grocery store for two minutes. He didn't want to be bothered with that; he wanted the person that was gonna go into your car and rob you." Murphy apparently didn't get along with one precinct boss who pushed for summonses, the pressure intensifying department-wide during Tuesday and Thursday "summons blitzes," when a cop face disciplinary action if he writes 15 tickets, say, instead of 30.

To get the great arrests, you have to go where the violent crime is. Murphy and Brandow were brought onto the Roosevelt Avenue Task Force, where they intercepted crimes in progress underneath the elevated No. 7 line subway tracks, a nightly hotbed of robbery, assault, and drug trafficking. Murphy says his gratification came from making the area safe, "so kids could go to the bodega for milk without sprinting from bullets."

It's not an uncommon assumption that white cops eager to make felony arrests in high-crime areas harbor a racist agenda, so I ask the 115th's community-affairs officer, Earl Dawson—who is African-American and who was at the precinct for the entirety of Richard Murphy's time there—whether he ever saw Murphy show any evidence of racial insensitivity. "First of all," Dawson says evenly, "if I had, I wouldn't tell you; I would just say nothing. But to answer your question: Absolutely not. I've seen Officer Murphy with everyone short of a Martian, and he treated everyone the same. He's a very respectful young man. A true civil servant. He came to this precinct with a twinkle in his eye, and I knew he would be a credit to it." When the Diallo shooting occurred, Dawson says, "I was surprised that it was him. My first feeling was, I felt bad for him."

IT WAS WITH BRANDOW THAT MURPHY made his best arrests. "Steve taught me how to be a good cop," Murphy says. "I was lucky to have him as a mentor." Once Murphy and Brandow arrested two men who'd invaded a home, hog-tied and robbed five people, committed a carjacking, and shot a man, almost fatally. (Both officers earned the rarely awarded Commendation medal for "an act involving grave personal danger.")

"But probably my scariest time at the 115," Murphy says, "was when Steve and I rolled into a couple of guys fighting over a gun." The partners weren't sure who was the perpetrator, who the complainant; they had only seconds to react. One of the men dropped the gun; Brandow stuck it in his back pocket; he and Murphy started trying to arrest the man they determined was the perpetrator, but that man, who was considerably huskier than either cop, fought vigorously with Brandow and with the complainant.

As a crowd gathered, "I got one handcuff on him," Brandow recalls. "I was trying to get the other out, I was totally vulnerable to the gun in my back pocket." Murphy suddenly saw a third man come out of the crowd, up behind Brandow, and start to pull Brandow's gun out of its holster. Murphy had a couple of seconds to decide whether to shoot; he didn't because, he says, "I didn't want to take the chance of shooting Steve." Instead, "I tackled him off so he wasn't able to take Steve's gun, got him to the ground and handcuffed him," while Brandow finished cuffing the first man.

When Murphy recounts the incident (for which they were also decorated), he ends it there. But Brandow says, "Rich Murphy saved my life. If he had reacted any slower—and the majority of cops

Photographs courtesy of the Murphy family.

wouldn't have been able to react as fast as he did—then this individual would have had my gun out and would have shot me with it. A second later, I'd probably be dead. Later on, you feel it. You know it. This is our job. This is what stresses us. This is what it's all about."

ONE NIGHT ABOUT A YEAR INTO HIS posting at the 115, Rich Murphy got an after-work call from Brian McConville to join him and some friends at the Forest Hills bar Backdrafts. At the table with McConville were two other cops and two sleek, gregarious, tomboyish women, Sharon and Keren Gutnik. The daughters of divorced Israeli émigrés, the twins were raised in Flushing by their strict traditionalist father, a diamond cutter who eventually owned medallion cabs. They had graduated from the Hebrew Academy of West Queens, where the dress code was conservative, the sexes segregated, and prayer and Torah study took up four hours a day—and they were now, as both women put it, "retaliating" against their sheltered upbringing. Keren worked on Wall Street; Sharon was an accountant for a 47th Street gem company (later, she would go to work for a telecommunications firm). McConville knew Keren as an ace dart thrower and pool player who was dating plumber-electrician Anthony Favia (to whom she's now married). The Gutniks were "great; they were like guys," McConville says. "You could say anything in front of them."

The women didn't think Rich Murphy was a cop. "He wasn't a badge-flasher, and he didn't have that macho attitude," Keren says. Sharon was surprised that despite his "College Point lingo"—*aks* and *ain't*—he could talk politics, history, geography. When Richard's friends would beep him during their dates, Sharon was struck that, unlike other guys, "instead of saying, 'I'll meet up with you at—' or 'Maybe later, man,' he'd tell them, 'No, I'm hangin' out with Sharon. That's right, I am whipped. You have a problem with it, don't beep me.' That attitude is why I wanted to marry him."

He started working around the clock to buy her an engagement ring. The only one of the parents who objected to the relationship, at least in the beginning, was Sharon's father. George Faller couldn't believe that Murphy was agreeing to raise his children Jewish: "Rich said, 'It's the same God, so in the bigger picture, it's not that big a deal; it's just semantics.' He was in love; he's still in love. He felt it was God's will that they met, so who was he to screw it up because he had a little problem he didn't anticipate?" Richard puts it this way: "If religion is based on love, then how can you let religion stand in the way of love? I talked to my priest—my priest is good—and he agreed with that."

Sharon and Richard were married under a *chuppah* by a rabbi and a priest. They had pooled their savings and took out two loans to pay for the wedding themselves: $25,000 for the ceremony and reception, $4,900 for the Caribbean honeymoon. Robert was born last December 9th, and the bris was held at the home of Rich's parents.

THE STREET CRIME UNIT IN THE EIGHTIES AND early nineties—an intimate corps of 105 to 150 officers, highly trained in stealth work and risky maneuvers, operating in tight, long-term teams—was one of the NYPD's top outfits. It represented less than one half of one percent of the department's manpower but was responsible for more than 20 percent of the gun arrests. The unit had decoy operations, taxi-robbery units, and cops highly familiar with the boroughs they worked. For a number of years, the unit also had about 25 detectives; every criminal was debriefed immediately after arrest, resulting in more gun arrests and the tracking of gun-trafficking and robbery patterns.

Deputy Inspector Richard F. Savage was the SCU's commanding officer during those years. "The secret was our selection process," he says. "The applicant had to be a star in his precinct, with not just a good reputation but a lot of good-quality arrests, and couldn't have a lot of negative disciplines. The ideal candidate was an anti-crime plainclothesman in his precinct. He had to be highly recommended by his commanding officer. Then, having all these things, they came to me for an interview." Savage grilled the cop, looking for the rare few who would show character and street smarts in the most dangerous assignments.

In the middle to late nineties, the idea of expanding the small, elite unit to 400 members was broached. Savage believes the notion "came directly from the mayor and the commissioner, to try to help the mayor further reduce crime." Savage opposed the proposed expansion, warning his bosses that such a move would be "dangerous." "I love the department," he says, speaking very deliberately. "I hesitate to say anything negative. I hesitate to place blame anywhere. But I thought the expansion was a stupid idea, and I told them so." The expansion went forward anyway. Savage was transferred and has since retired.

“I THOUGHT THE EXP
a stupid idea, and I told them so,” says the Street
Crime Unit's former chief. It went forward anywa

Active, idealistic young cops wanted to join Street Crime. As Rich Murphy's ex-cop friend Faller puts it, "If you wanted to get the bad guys, if you weren't disillusioned, then Street Crime was it." In charge of the expansion was Chief of Department Louis Anemone, known as a cop's cop, who, in contrast to the avuncular, wistful Savage, speaks with passion of the sheer romance of dangerous street work, even in retirement.

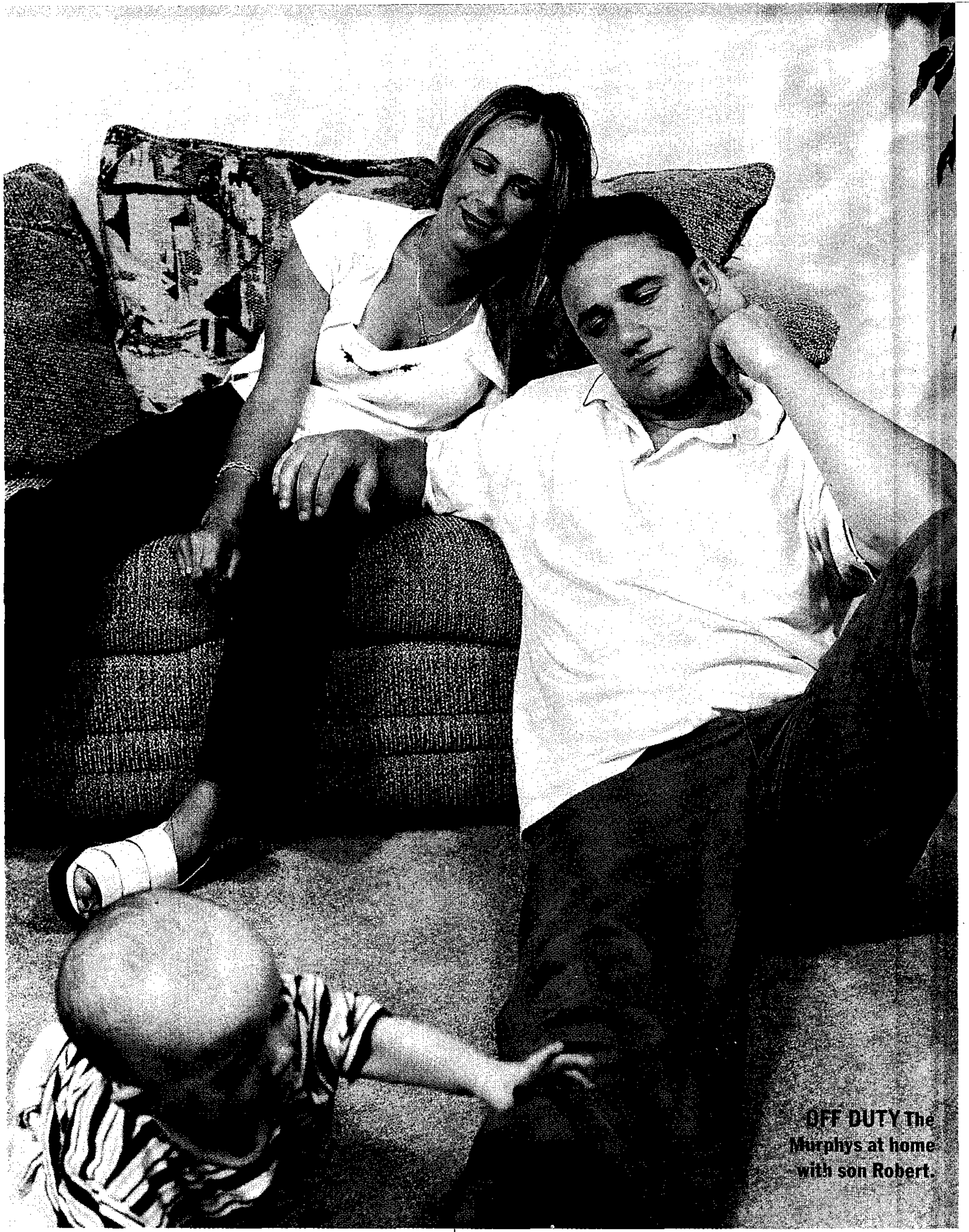
When Murphy told Brian McConville he was applying to Street Crime, "I told him he was crazy. He wasn't gettin' extra money for it—workin' weird hours in bad neighborhoods. I told him it wasn't for me. But Rich wanted to clean [those neighborhoods] up."

Earl Dawson remembers having "had a foreboding about Street Crime. I was just never real comfortable with it. A plainclothes unit should reflect the nature of the neighborhood it services; the whole point is to blend in." But the community-affairs officer never had a chance to share his misgivings with Murphy. "One day," Dawson says, "he was just gone."

HAVING SPENT ALL THE SUMMERS OF her youth in Israel (where she tried to join the army), Sharon Murphy is used to adversity. She kept New York 1 on all day through the demonstrations ("I'm a glutton for misery," she wryly admits; Richard, to keep sane, avoided all media about himself) and wore Rich's Street Crime Unit jacket with pride all last winter. (No one on the street said a word, and though "our neighbors probably whispered among themselves" about her husband's new notoriety, she adds, "they didn't say anything to us.")

"The worst thing is watching the pain Rich is in," Sharon says, "and realizing there's nothing I can do to help him." "The worst thing is seeing what my wife is going through" were Rich's first words to me. "Yes, I'm scared," he admits. "We're all scared. It's like livin' with an anvil on your shoulder."

ON MARCH 31, RICHARD MURPHY WAS ARrested, fingerprinted, arraigned, and bailed out, along with Boss, McMellon, and Carroll. Bronx D.A. Robert Johnson said, "I recognize, as others do, that the death of Amadou Diallo has a context



OFF DUTY The Murphys at home with son Robert.

larger than the facts of this case. Feelings of fear and frustration abound. Troubling questions have been raised, particularly in communities of color but certainly not limited to them, regarding police-community relations, civil liberties, and issues of respect."

ANSION WAS

The *Times* opened its editorial two days later noting that the murder indictments could be expected to "calm" the "angry" crowds.

Johnson has said he never heard of police firing as many shots at an unarmed man as the 41 in this case. Yet there was such a case, in October 1997, in the Bronx. It was much less disturbing than Diallo's in key regards: The three young men the cops shot—one was killed, another injured, and a third was unharmed—were drug dealers who had attempted to rob undercover narcotics cops, and though they had no gun, one held a bottle, and a screwdriver was later found in his pocket. Still, the cops had fired 52 shots, on the street, in the middle of the afternoon, some in front of a community center where mothers were standing with small children. Most of the seven cops who fired, the police report shows, were black or Hispanic, and while some were disciplined, the case was never presented to a grand jury.

Johnson's spokesman, Steven Reed, told me that the lack of grand jury investigation was appropriate because the witnesses' accounts did not contradict the officers'. He said the number of shots, time, and place were immaterial. However, one eyewitness, Bernardo Rodriguez, the executive director of the community center, felt differently. He told me he spoke to the commander at the scene, complained at the precinct, attended a community-board meeting, and reported the incident to New York Civil Liberties Union executive director Norman Siegel, serving at the time on the mayor's task force on police brutality. Despite his efforts, Rodriguez's attempts to gain greater accountability for the incident were fruitless.

SHARON MURPHY TICKS OFF on her fingers the things she refuses to do anymore: Watch her once-favorite TV show, *NYPD Blue* (in one episode last spring, a character called the Diallo shooting cold-blooded murder). So much as glance at an issue of *The New Yorker* (she pronounces its Art Spiegelman cover of a cop gleefully firing at citizens in an amusement-park shooting gallery "a disgrace"). See another Susan Sarandon movie (Sharon: "I saw her hold up a sign saying you were a racist!" Richard: "Nah, she just walked through and got arrested.")

When I arrive at the Murphy house in late September, Rich has lost weight; his hair has grown out. He's just finished changing Robby, now eight months old, and he's depositing big smacky kisses on the baby's stomach. Then he and Sharon take baby, stroller, and diaper bag, and we drive off to Kissena Park and walk around the large, meandering lake. Sharon hooks her arm in his; he pushes the stroller. They talk about camping trips they've taken to Maine; he says he'd love a house in Vermont; but every plan's on hold.

The house at 1157 Wheeler Avenue in the Bronx is, like the Murphys', a red-brick building. The sunny day I visit there, residents sit on stoops and lean on cars, and children crowd a parked ice-cream truck. You can still see the bullet holes on the outside of the building, and you can see more holes in the walls of the vestibule. Someone has written, near the mailboxes, REST IN PEACE, AMADOU.

I asked Richard Murphy last summer what he would give to be able to take back the events that happened here. His eyes snapped open as if at a mirage. He drew a breath and said, "Anything." ■

Photograph by Dana Lixenberg.

DROPPING T

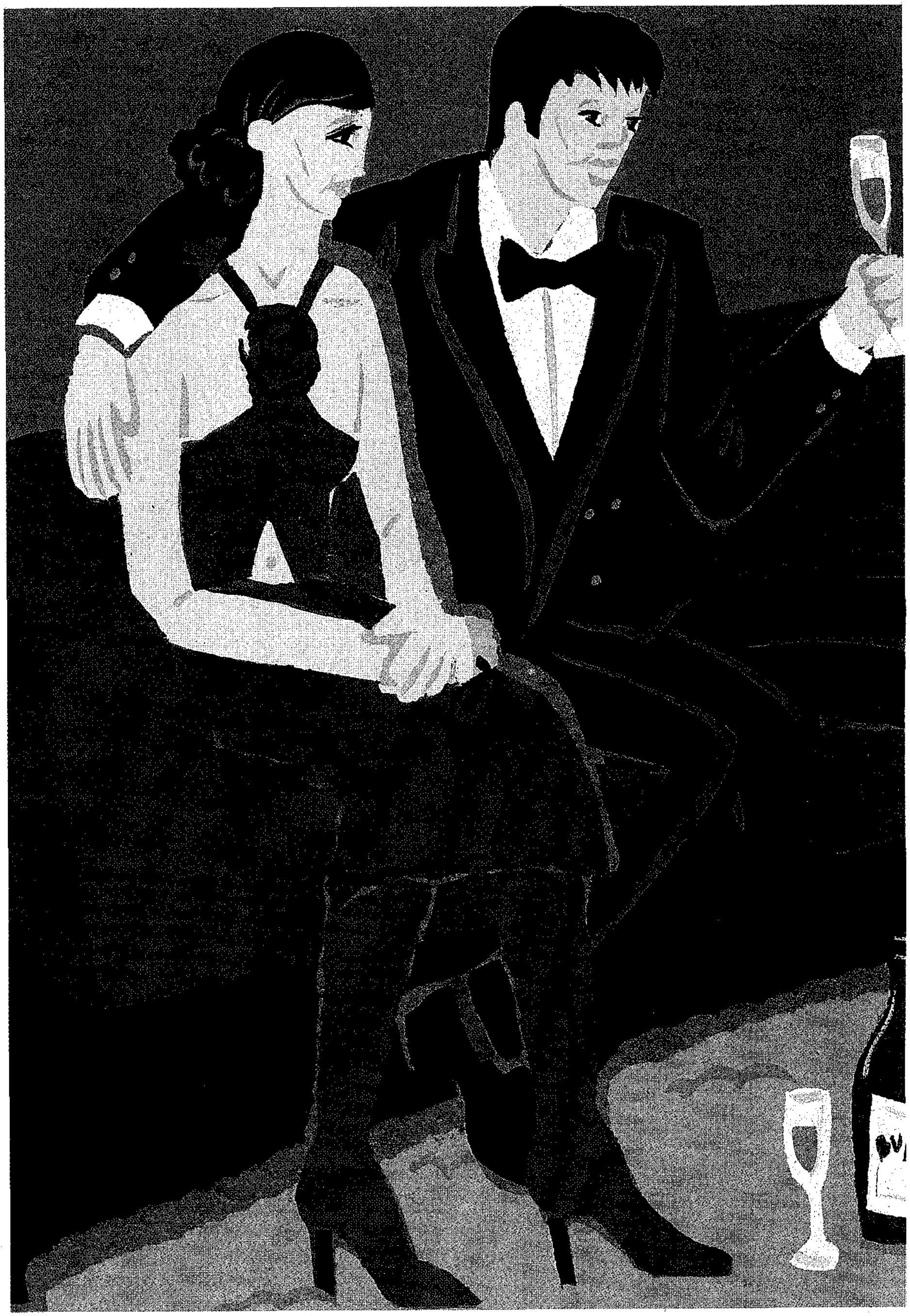
Cowed by crowds and wary of Y2K trouble, New Yorkers are stay means some of the best seats in the house are still available. Bu

ON JUDGMENT DAY, THE LAST shall be first and the first shall be last—or so it's been written—and as the clock ticks toward the millennium, no one knows that better than Clive David. Back in 1993, the Beverly Hills society-event planner—who helped throw the birthday party where Marilyn Monroe sang to JFK—booked the Plaza Hotel's Palm Court and Terrace Ballroom for this New Year's Eve after reading in the *Times* that hotel rooms were already going fast. At the time, friends slapped him on the back for securing the stateliest jewel in New York's Y2K crown. "People said, 'Clive, this is the best thing you've ever done,' " he remembers.

By the beginning of this year, David seemed to have established his $5,000-to-$7,500 black-tie Millennium Ball as *the* A-list way to spend a once-in-a-lifetime evening. But by June, he had reservations for only about half the room's 400 seats—mostly from foreigners. To his usual clientele, "the fear of crowds and gridlock and everything else became a turnoff." And then there was what he calls the greed factor: "Musicians, performers, staff—I cannot tell you the prices everyone was asking," he says. "The red ink just got to be ludicrous."

So David set another trend: He became the first party promoter to cancel his New Year's festivities.

DAVID IS HARDLY THE ONLY VICTIM OF "Y2K fatigue"—the pre-party hangover that's knocked the wind out of New York's New Year's well before the festivities start. By the end of November, the ad hoc company Celebration 2000 had to scuttle plans for its $1,000-to-$2,500 Party of the Century at the Javits Center—an intimate buffet for 30,000 with performances by Sting, Kool & the Gang, and Aretha Franklin. Billy Joel

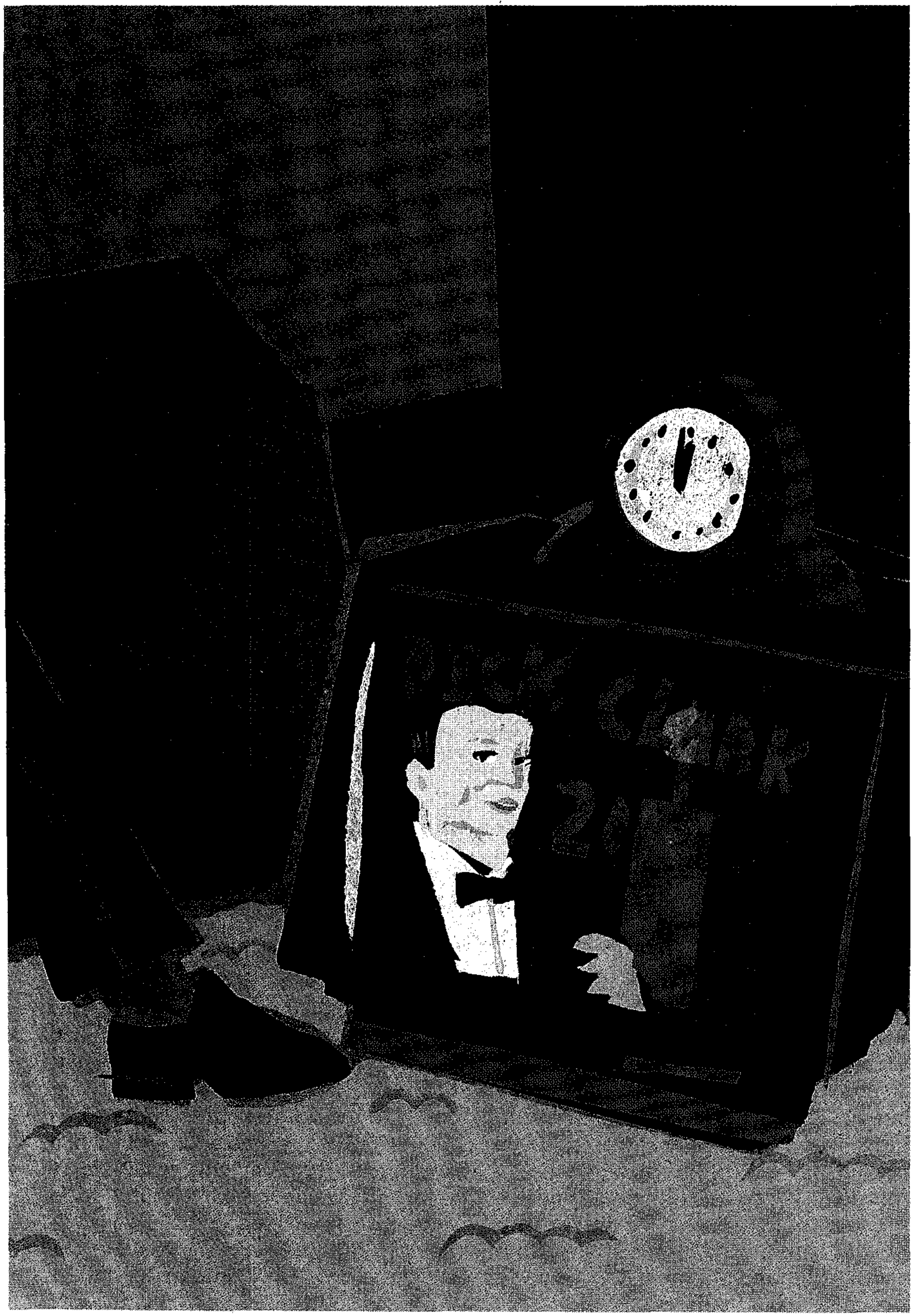


ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARK GAGNON

HE BALL

g home in droves this New Year's Eve. That good luck getting a cab.

By Robert Kolker



is still having trouble selling tickets to his $999 New Year's concert at the Garden. And restaurateurs like Danny Meyer and Jean-Georges Vongerichten opted to close for the evening rather than strain to provide a fully fleshed-out experience with a skeleton staff.

Great expectations are at least partly to blame—as are promoters who charged too much too early and "killed the thrill," says high-end party planner John Schwartz, who had to cancel his bash in L.A. but is moving forward on a private affair in New York. "There was a tremendous amount of hype, but I don't think it was strategically planned to match people's expectations," he says. "It just put a psychological damper on what was supposed to be a once-in-a-lifetime event."

New Year's Eve 1999 was expected to be an orgy of excess—an extravagant coming-of-age bacchanal for the bull market. Yet those atop the A-list are hightailing it to St. Barts, Bali (where nightlife impresario Mark Baker will ring in the millennium with prayers from a Balinese priest at $500 a ticket)—or even just Blockbuster. "I'm going to be in Paris," says Sotheby's heiress and fashion-department head Tiffany Dubin. "But my real dream would be to be in New York. We just got this flat-screen TV, and it would be great to have a tub of caviar and a bottle of vodka."

The media drumbeat about terrorism and Y2K computer problems, as well as the very real problem of crowds—Times Square alone is expected to attract as many as a million revelers instead of the usual 500,000—have also dampened fin de siècle enthusiasm. Worst of all for the professional-socializer set, perhaps, is the prospect that many of the revelers will arrive by bridge or tunnel. "I have not a clue what I'm doing," says iron-man party boy Anthony Haden-Guest. "But I can give you a long list of places I'm not going to go, starting with Times Square. Saturday night is amateur night of the week, New Year's Eve is amateur night of the year, and this is going to be the amateur night of human civilization."

Many of those who want to stay on this island are still making plans to make plans. "I was out for dinner last night at Canteen," says an entertainment publicist, "and there was a table with Julia Roberts and a table with Sarah Jessica Parker, and everyone was talking about how they're staying in New York, but they just don't know what they're doing. And this is December."

Of course, Julia Roberts is unlikely to stay in and rent *Notting Hill*—and the millennial hype has created opportunities for less planned, less predictable, and perhaps more pleasant partying. "I think there was too much anticipation that people were going to buy early," says Jason Strauss, co-owner

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“Saturday night is amateur night of the week, New Year’
of the year, and this is going to be the amateur night of human

of Strategic Events and one of the producers of the “Pier 2000” party at Pier 92 Ballroom, which is selling $200-to-$1,000 tickets at a fairly brisk pace. “It’s going to be like every other New Year’s, where people are going to make their plans on December 15.”

The hottest ticket in town is likely to be Ted Field’s private resurrection of the Studio 54 scene at its original site; Mark Ronson will D.J., and food will include a crustacean bar. “Everyone’s calling and saying they’re a friend of Ted’s,” crows model-actress Elizabeth Nottoli, Field’s girlfriend and an owner of L.A. party handler La Bon Vie, which sent out a little disco ball as its invite.

Nightclubs are an obvious last-minute alternative, but several of the city’s top party promoters are taking the evening off. “Rentals on venues are five, six, and seven times their normal rates,” groans “Body & Soul” promoter John Davis, who instead decided to hold a $25 all-day party at Cheetah on January 1. “It’s just too expensive to throw a party unless you charge $200 a ticket.” Which is exactly what Cheetah is charging for its “Millennium Bash.” Other clubs braving the big night for big bucks include Life (with Grandmaster Flash, Funkmaster Flex, and Paula Cole), One51 (with Samantha Ronson as D.J. and David Cone and David Wells as hosts), and Twilo (with Junior Vasquez). Of course, not everyone has such high expectations: Downtown club promoter Chip Ducket is charging $19.84 for an eighties-themed gay party at Pyramid. “I would be more worried,” he smirks, “if I was charging people $2,000 to see Kool & the Gang.”

RESTAURANTS ARE FACING A different variation on that same problem: how to deliver a once-in-a-century experience and still cover once-in-a-century costs. Already, Moomba, Balthazar, Aquavit, Mercer Kitchen, the Oyster Bar, and Union Square Cafe have decided to close their doors rather than overcharge and under-deliver. “I’d expect a lot for a thousand bucks,” says Eric Ripert of Le Bernardin, who closes every New Year’s Eve. “What if you get seated near the bathroom? Already you’re pissed off.”

Those that remain open are paying dearly to live up to the hype. Le Cirque 2000’s $1,000 seating, said to be sold out, includes a contribution to the Children’s Storefront, an expensive gift, and a seven-course dinner that features caviar, foie gras, and truffles that cost owner Sirio Maccioni $3,000 per kilogram. “We’re really trying to give something back to the people and not look so cheap,” Maccioni says. “For the first time, we will have a band on the second floor with a small dance floor. I’m not sure it was a good idea, but I got outvoted.”

The biggest cost, of course, is the help: Maccioni is paying employees double, and Steve Hanson is offering all of his employees the choice of bringing their significant other or getting a $100 bonus. Even so, the earlier bookings at his restaurants are going faster than the later ones. “I don’t think it’s about the money,” he says. “A lot of people want to be home and in a secure place.”

Where they don’t want to be is in a crowded theater. Broadway is going dark for the night because of the Times Square festivities, and other performers are facing the same ticket-sales problems in New York as in the rest of the country. As of last week, the Beacon Theater was still selling $250 second-row tickets to Meat Loaf’s New Year’s concert (the shows on previous nights are almost sold out), and Town Hall still had $175 seventh-row seats for Sandra Bernhard. “I think they’ve underestimated how many people want to stay home and how many people are afraid to go out,” says former Tramps booker Steve Weitzman. “I’m getting the hell out of here—I’m going to Minneapolis to see Prince play his pay-per-view concert.”

In New York, the most successful parties are taking place well outside the shadow of Times Square. The American Museum of Natural History’s black-tie-gala preview of the new Rose Center and Hayden planetarium is sold out. The *Intrepid*’s annual gala is selling tickets at its normal pace for $550—more than twice the normal price. A party in the old Barneys building in Chelsea is said to be two-thirds sold out at $250 a ticket. “If I were midtown or downtown, I would have closed, of course,” says Daniel Boulud, who’s charging $1,250 per person at Daniel. “But the three restaurants we have are all in 10021—I don’t see Park Avenue in the upper Sixties being clutched for hours, because the police will do whatever they can to protect this neighborhood.”

EVEN THE NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ARE safe will be that much harder to reach. On any non-millennial New Year’s, it’s nearly impossible to find a cab, and the looming transit strike—threatened to begin December 15 if the MTA doesn’t grant a pay raise to its 33,000 employees—raises the specter of a city at the mercy of car services like Henry Limousine, which is asking $3,000 for a twelve-hour stretch-limo rental. The possibility of Y2Chaos has the city on alert: The NYPD is putting 4,000 extra officers on duty, EMS is doubling its staff, and the Fire Department is adding 1,200 personnel to its ranks for the night. The FBI, for its part, vows to watch *everything.*

Times Square may be the belly of the beast, but no one knows how large that belly could swell. In a typical year, police build holding pens to maintain crowd control on Broadway from 43rd to as high as 59th Street on Seventh Avenue and from 42nd to the mid-Fifties on Broadway. This year, organizers will add four extra video screens so revelers can watch the festivities from as far away as Sixth Avenue, Eighth Avenue, and even Herald Square.

Police may keep all nearby side streets clear of people, as they have in the past—or they may not be able to. The MTA has a plan to close at least four midtown subway stations to prevent a crush of bodies after midnight—or they might not even need to. "We don't really know what to expect as far as crowds are concerned," admits one Times Square organizer. The truth is, no one knows—and the police are keeping tight-lipped about contingency plans. "If it's about crowd control, it's a police matter," says one city source. "They're very jealous of their turf."

"Everything should go normally that night," predicts Jerome Hauer, director of the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management, which is coordinating Y2K contingency plans. "Then again, that assumes it won't snow—and that there won't be a transit strike."

LAST SPRING, LAWYER AND "PAGE SIX" MOGUL Leon Charney tried to auction the roof of the commercial tower he owns at 1441 Broadway—the heart of Times Square—for $100,000 for New Year's Eve, even offering to spring for the catering. Tommy Mottola showed interest, as did Madonna. But his plans were ruined by Y2K markup: Caterers wanted too much for a job that involved lugging food up to a rooftop.

Eve is amateur night civilization."

So instead of making a mint on his property, Charney might end up opening his roof for free and letting his tenants—Liz Claiborne, Ellen Tracy, Gloria Vanderbilt, Dana Buchman, Karen Kane, and Tommy Hilfiger among them—come up to enjoy the view.

"We'd get a lot of goodwill from our tenants," Charney says. Besides, he adds, "a lot of people want to stay home. They're afraid. Between Y2K and a lot of sensational feelings about the millennium, they don't know what to expect." ■

Additional reporting by Ethan Brown, Vanessa Grigoriadis, Beth Landman Keil, Nan Parry, and Ethan Smith.

CHAMPANGST

"Champagne producers . . . arrrgggghh!" roars Michael Kapon, the usually jovial proprietor of Acker Merrall & Condit.

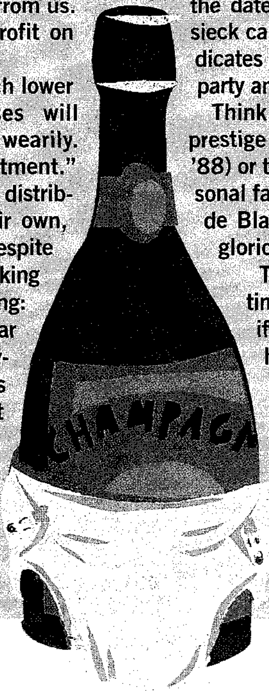
There are champagne shortages in New York City, one of the world's largest wine markets, and of some cuvées, there's nothing left or prices are rising fast. Whatever the Pollyannas of bubbly have said over the past few months, there's growing chaos in the wine trade, including cases from France that just don't show up.

"There is no shortage," purrs the suave and courtly Pierre-Emmanuel Taittinger of the house of Taittinger, at a luncheon at Lutèce. "We have supplied our good friends." He doesn't specify who or where his good friends are. Could be here, could be Dubai.

"Of course there's a shortage!" scoffs Scott Abramson of Park Avenue Liquor Shop, who is used to getting all the fizzy wine he can sell, including White Star, Moët et Chandon's core bubbly, whose production is millions of cases and is normally available at every last mom-and-pop on Main Street. Now, cries Abramson, "it's on allocation!"

"The average vintage bottle," says Kapon, "has risen from the $40-to-$45 range to a $60-to-$65 range. Nonvintage brands have punched up from $20-to-$25 to $30-to-$35." The proprietors of the splendid new wine emporium Union Square Wines & Spirits agree: "We're looking at the third or fourth price increase. The big guys have taken tremendous advantage."

"We have been very wise about prices," continues Taittinger, with a smile worthy of Talleyrand. "Prices have gone up by a considerable factor, but not from us. It's not in our interest to profit on the millennium."



"I've never seen the French lower their prices. The increases will stick," Kapon observes wearily. "Gonna be very strong resentment."

Even though importers and distributors can lift prices on their own, many champagne houses, despite booming sales, have been looking to jack 'em. Also worth noting: This hasn't been a vintage year for U.S.-French relations. Several nasty trade skirmishes culminated with U.S. meat producers' demanding the French buy their hormone-riddled beef.

The French refused; the U.S. slapped punitive taxes on stinky cheese; French farmers released animals into a McDonald's. Could this be *l'heure de payback?* Yes, good friends, you have McDonald's, you have McRosoft, but we have the 1985 Taittinger Comtes de Champagne Rosé, one of the most delicious fluids on earth. You would like some? Sor-ree.

Whatever's going on and whoever's to blame, here's the skinny on what there is and what there isn't (vintages run $100-400; nonvintages are under $75, some under $50):

Harder to find than Rudy Giuliani's heart is any quantity of the best-known prestige cuvées in stellar vintages ('85, '88, '90): Roederer (Cristal), Moët et Chandon (Dom Pérignon), or Bollinger R.D. Single cases of 1990 Cristal are around, but they're going for up to $4,500. Available (going fast) in ditto vintages: Taittinger Comtes de Champagne, Veuve Clicquot Grande Dame, Pol Roger Winston Churchill, Laurent-Perrier Grande Siècle, and, surprisingly, Krug. Some 1993's are available, but in many cases are too young to drink ('93 Cristal is at Park Avenue at $225 a bottle; that's 40 to 50 percent above normal).

Even nonvintages are running low. Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label, Moët and Chandon White Star, Bollinger Special Cuvée, and Taittinger La Française are hard to get in quantity. Other best-sellers, like Mumm Cordon Rouge and Perrier-Jouët, are still okay. If you're particular, though, get it now.

The thing to be is particular but adventurous. A hugely underrated prestige cuvée is Dom Ruinart Blancs de Blancs from Ruinart. The 1990 is sublime. Equally so: Charles Heidsieck 1990 Millèsimè. Or try the dated nonvintages Charles Heidsieck calls Mise en Cave (the date indicates cellar age): gorgeous, elegant party animals.

Think about Philipponnat and its prestige cuvée Clos des Goisses ('85, '88) or the NV Royale Réserve; a personal fave is Billecart-Salmon Blanc de Blancs Brut ('88, '89), and its glorious NV Brut Rosé.

The Big Midnight is a great time to meet rosé champagnes if you haven't yet. Most top houses make vintage and NV rosés. They'll make you very happy if your favorite yellow stuff is out.

Have a great next 1,000 years, and for Pete's sake, point that damn bottle at the wall, will ya?

TONY HENDRA

BEST BETS

The best of all possible things to buy, see, and do in the best of all possible cities

BY CORKY POLLAN

Door Men

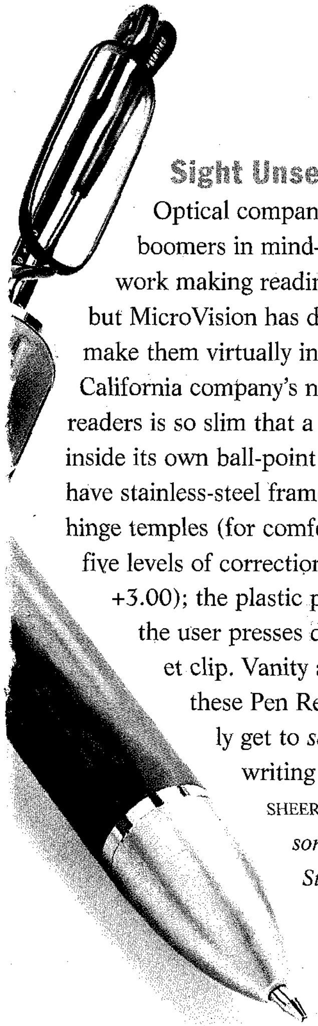
Oh, to be a child again at Christmas . . . no grappling with gift-giving decisions, no elbowing your way through people-saturated stores, no traumas over money spent. Well, this Elfin Wreath, with its explosion of tiny wooden toys, will do nothing to solve grown-up shopping woes, but it may revive memories of the naïve joys of Christmases past ($80).

E.A.T. GIFTS/*1062 Madison Avenue, near 80th Street/212-861-2544*

Wild Horses

If you think you've had it with pony skin, Diego Della Valle may make you reconsider. At Tod's, his tony emporium of flat-heeled but high-style footwear, you'll find pony skin dyed the yummiest Easter-egg shades, then morphed into swank mules and bags. The Italian slides have leather soles, the purses Tod's signature Vacchetta leather handles. They're in store now, just in time to slip them into your Vuitton duffel on the way to Nevis (mules, $425; bag, $1,200).

TOD'S/*650 Madison Avenue, near 60th Street/212-644-5945*



Sight Unseen

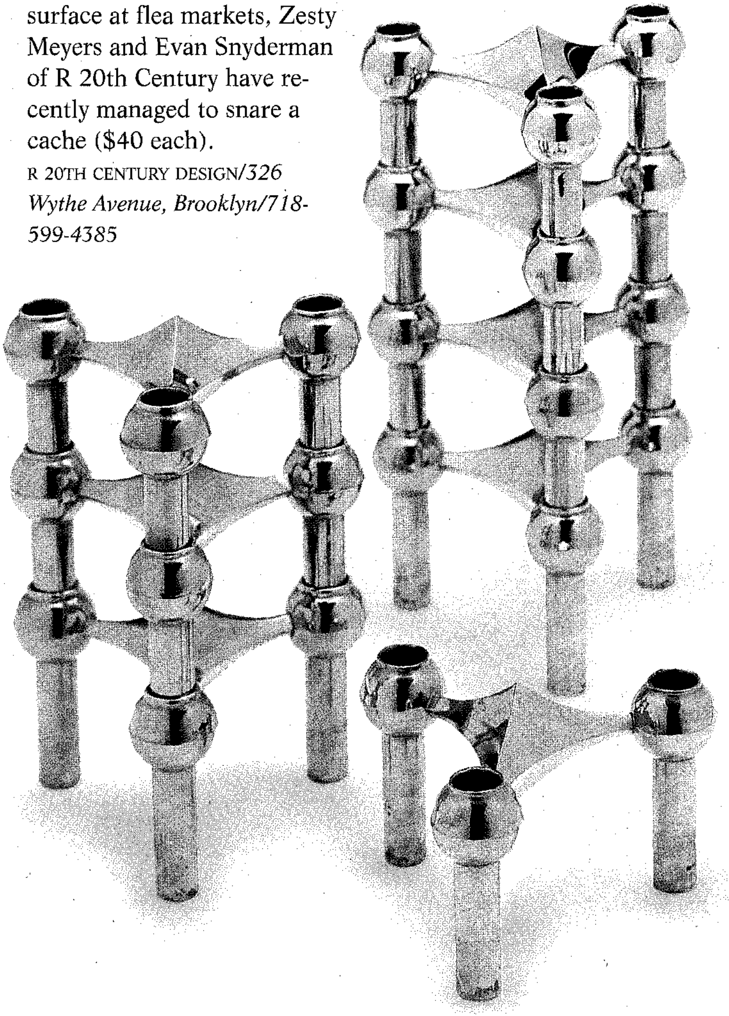
Optical companies—with baby-boomers in mind—are hard at work making reading glasses smaller, but MicroVision has devised a way to make them virtually invisible. This California company's newest crop of readers is so slim that a pair fits neatly inside its own ball-point pen. The glasses have stainless-steel frames and spring-hinge temples (for comfort), and come in five levels of correction (+1.00 to +3.00); the plastic pens open when the user presses down on the pocket clip. Vanity aside, with one of these Pen Readers, you actually get to *see* what you're writing ($60).

SHEEROPTICS/*1268 Madison Avenue, near 90th Street/212-987-9898*

My Friend Flicker

Bamberg Metalworks, a West German company, introduced these nickel-plated cast-aluminum candleholders in the fifties, and they quickly made an appearance on every stylish dining table. The charm? They could be stacked into towers, arranged in endless symmetrical or asymmetrical combinations, or merely snaked down the center of a table. The company stopped producing them in the mid-seventies, and though a few of the basic triangle units would periodically surface at flea markets, Zesty Meyers and Evan Snyderman of R 20th Century have recently managed to snare a cache ($40 each).

R 20TH CENTURY DESIGN/*326 Wythe Avenue, Brooklyn/718-599-4385*



Photographed by Tommy Naess

Send shopping questions to Corky Pollan, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999.

SALES & BARGAINS **SHYAMA PATEL**

Next Season's Greetings

Make spring come early: *Amid the Christmas blitz, did anyone notice the fall-collections closeouts? A Saks buyer finds* **keepers on the sale racks.**

As the gift-shopping season hits full throttle, take a moment to think about what *you* want. Designers' fall collections are now on sale, and it's worth snagging a few key spring pieces. Forget what you wanted in September—now you need things that won't be fashion history by the turn of the century (i.e., pony-skin skirts). To separate what works from what doesn't, **Saks Fifth Avenue**'s fashion director, Dianne Cisneros, gave us a tactical lesson.

Read the bold prints: Dianne Cisneros plays personal shopper.

Leading us to the second floor, where big-ticket items are now 40 percent off (always browse high-end), Cisneros rattles off what we'll be looking for this spring. "Denim is *major.* Plus, bold color, leather, ruffles, and what I call 'charm school'—those sweet, innocent, ladylike pieces." At Gucci, she finds an A-list jeans jacket in a muted red ($267). "Color's the most current way to wear it," she confides. Next, she passes over Dolce & Gabbana's "fall-ish" patterns and focuses in on their bold turquoise and pink florals (pictured)—"Too springy for fall but fresh and exciting going forward." A pair of zebra-print pants ($333) remind her of "what Michael Kors did." At Marc Jacobs, she points to a perennially coveted thermal-knit cashmere sweater ($510). "Seasonless—I live for it," she gushes. Last, she suggests a trench "any way you want it—sleek, feminine, even in python." She models a red, belted version at Yves Saint Laurent ($1,005, also in khaki). "It's not just for the rain," she explains. "You'll wear it over a cocktail dress, to work—*everywhere.*"

Inspired to find stuff that costs a bit less, we head up to the fifth floor (where markdowns occur through December). A bit of digging uncovers a pink suede A-line skirt with inverted seams from Illia ($286). "We're seeing *so* much leather and suede," says Cisneros. "In beige, suntan, and in all colors." For evening, we pick out Girlfriend's graphic printed sundress ($205, pictured)—much fresher than those Liberty prints in our closet.

Footwear's the best deal of all: Any of those dainty open shoes that currently scream *frostbite* will feel great come summer—and practically no one will know you got them out of season. "Sequins and crystal go particularly well into spring," Cisneros notes.

Picks of the Week

Diane von Furstenberg's sample sale has lots of sultry, colorful party-season dresses (pictured), tops, skirts, and sweaters for 40 to 60 percent off, from $20 to $150. Sizes 2–14. *389 W. 12th St. (212-753-1111); cash only: Thurs.–Fri. 9–7, Sat. 10–6; 12/9–12/11.*

Fashion Rescue, the UJA's social-service fund-raiser, has designer clothes for all ages at 50 to 75 percent off (including Polo Ralph Lauren, Nautica, and Tommy Hilfiger). Admission is $10 the first day, $6 thereafter. *Expo Center, Madison Square Garden, Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. (for tickets, call 212-465-6741); A.E., M.C., V.; Sun. 10–7:30, Mon.–Thurs. 10–10, Fri. 8–3, Sat. 6:30–10; 12/12–12/19.*

Jill Platner's sleek handmade silver jewelry (most of it on black woven cords) is sold at stores like Bergdorf Goodman. At the sample sale, most prices are about half off, from $25 for stud earrings to $500 for a heavy choker. *113 Crosby St. (212-941-1892); checks accepted; daily noon–7; 12/12–12/19.*

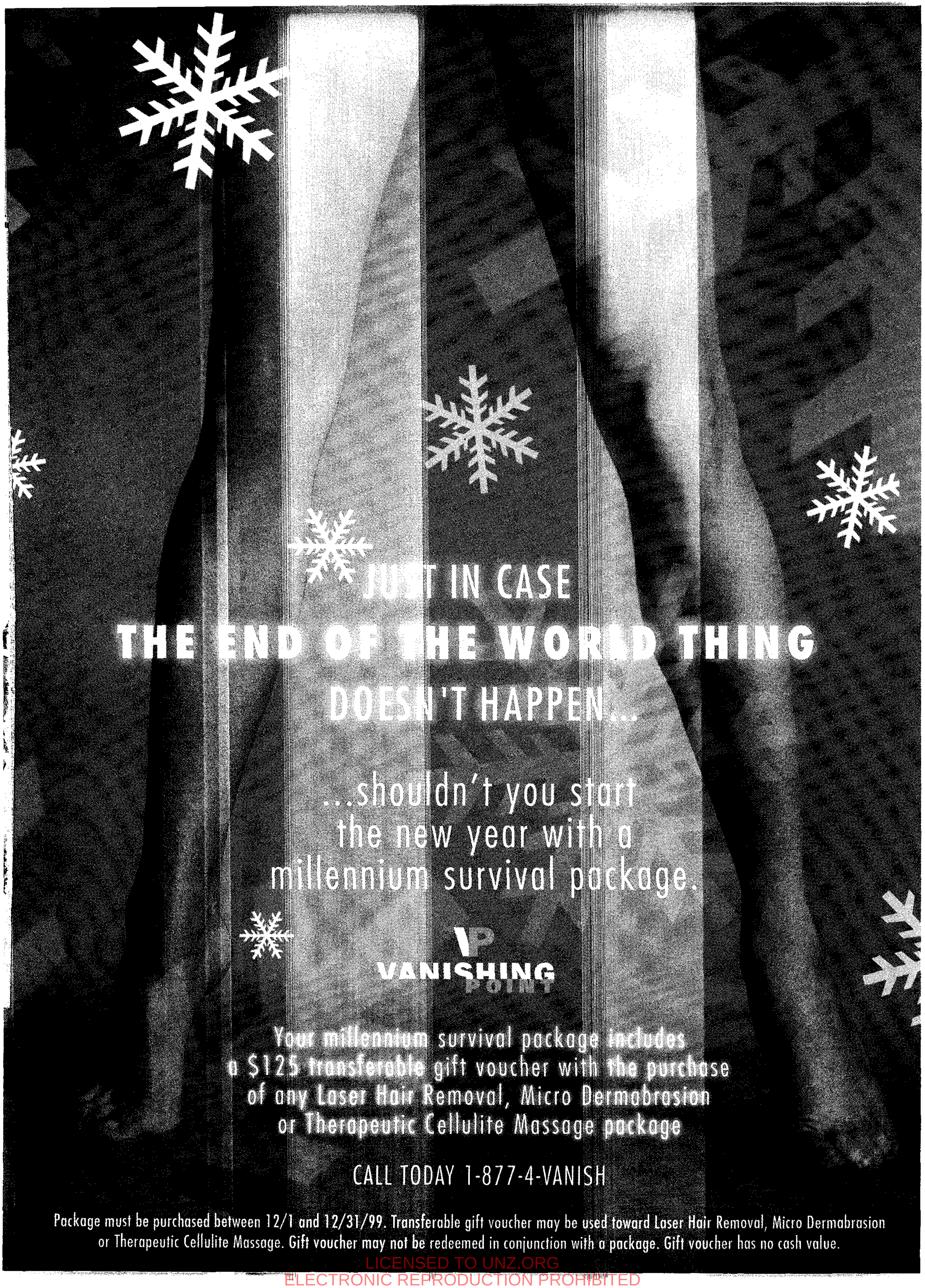
Showroom Seven has fall and holiday styles from Amaya, Beverly Mehl, Ghost, Kitty Boots, and Petro Zillia (plus crystal jewelry from Erickson Beamon) for 50–75 percent off, from $15 for a Kitty Boots lip-print sweatshirt to $500 for a Ghost coat. *498 Seventh Ave., near 36th St., twenty-fourth floor (212-643-4810); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Sat. 10–7; 12/7–12/17.*

Erik Stewart's trendy sweaters are always a good deal. At the sample sale, they're half off: Cottons are from $20–$60, synthetics are about $50, cashmeres are $50–100. Sportswear is $40–$90. Sizes S–XL. *1441 Broadway, near 40th St., 34th floor (212-944-9096); M.C., V.; Mon.–Fri. 9–5; 12/6–12/10.*

MU/H's rich brocade and embroidered home accessories are at stores like Bergdorf Goodman and ABC Carpet & Home. Here, they're 65 percent off: Pillows and table linens are $10–$150, curtain panels are $125, tree skirts are $200, bedding sets are $1,000. *121 E. 24th St., Suite 4R (212-228-7779); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed.–Fri. 9–7, Sat.–Sun. noon–6; 12/8–12/12.*

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Photographs: top, Hiroyuki Ito (2); bottom, courtesy of Diane Von Furstenberg.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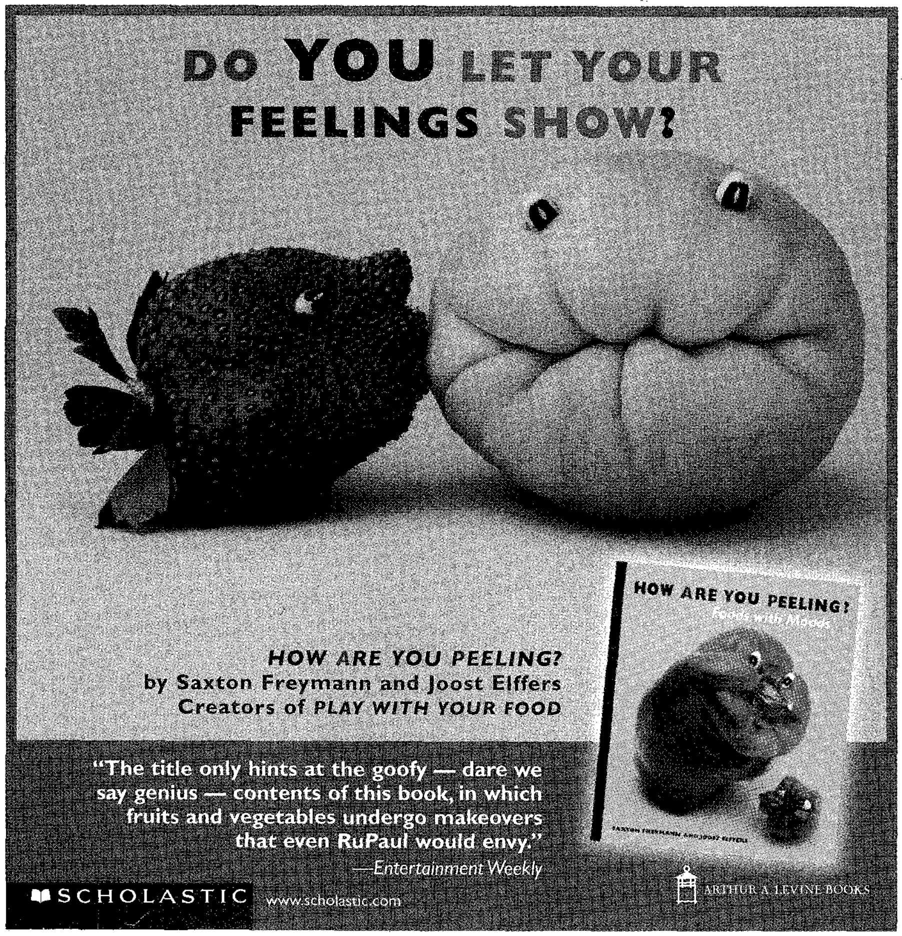
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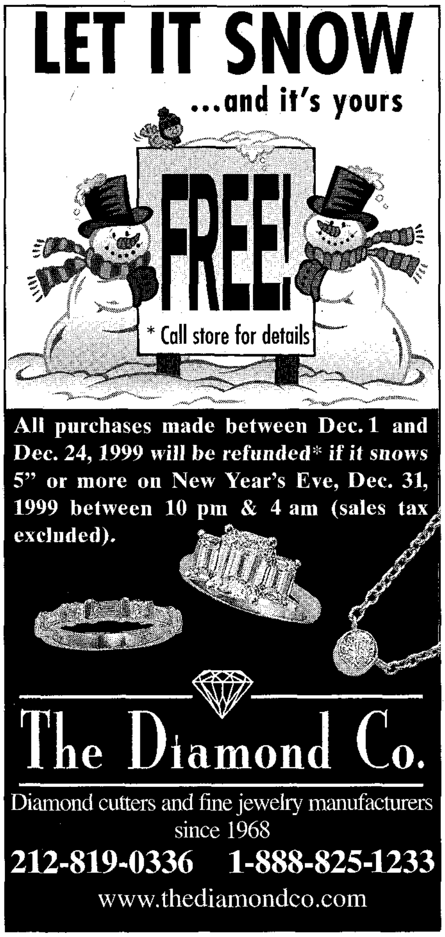
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ABH Design, Inc. has very high-end home and fashion accessories (pictured) for half what you'd pay in stores, like mink-cuffed cashmere gloves ($125), brocade bags ($85–$150), rabbit stoles ($795), and embellished pashminas ($125–$600). *153 E. 61st St., third floor (212-688-3764); M.C., V., checks; Mon.–Fri. 10–6:30; 12/6–12/31.*

RTR Packaging's sale is great for loading up on stylish gift boxes and bags in every imaginable size at wholesale prices (from 50 cents to $20). Hefty 25-foot rolls of holiday gift wrap are $14. *27 W. 20th St., Suite 606 (212-620-0011); cash only; Mon.–Fri. 10–4, Sat. noon–5, Sun. 1–5; 12/6–12/24.*

Susan Unger's studio sale offers lush velvet and silk evening clothes at half price. Opera coats and gowns are $350, scarves are $50–$150. Sizes 6–18. *208 W. 29th St., Suite 309 (212-736-8249); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Fri. 3–7:30; 12/6–12/10.*

The Art Students League's December sale is a way to support amateur painters and sculptors and pick up some of their work at surprisingly affordable prices (from $50 to $800—but there's a lot under $200). *215 W. 57th St. (212-247-4510); checks accepted; Mon.–Fri. 9–8:30, Sat. 10–3, Sun. 1–4; 12/10–12/29.*

Vivienne Westwood's first U.S. sample sale has groovy, sexy clothes (pictured) for 70 percent off: a T-shirt is $30, a plaid skirt is $150, a shearling jacket is $900. Ladies' sizes 4–8, men's 38–42. *71 Greene St., basement (212-334-1500); A.E., M.C., V.; Sat.–Sun. noon–5; 12/11– 12/12.* ■

Photographs: top, courtesy of ABH Design; bottom, courtesy of Vivienne Westwood.

PETER RAINER

Don’t Fret

In Woody Allen’s ‘Sweet and Lowdown,’ Sean Penn plays a jazz guitarist whose peerless artistry—surprise!—doesn’t make him a peerless guy.

Improvisation: Penn with Samantha Morton in *Sweet and Lowdown.*

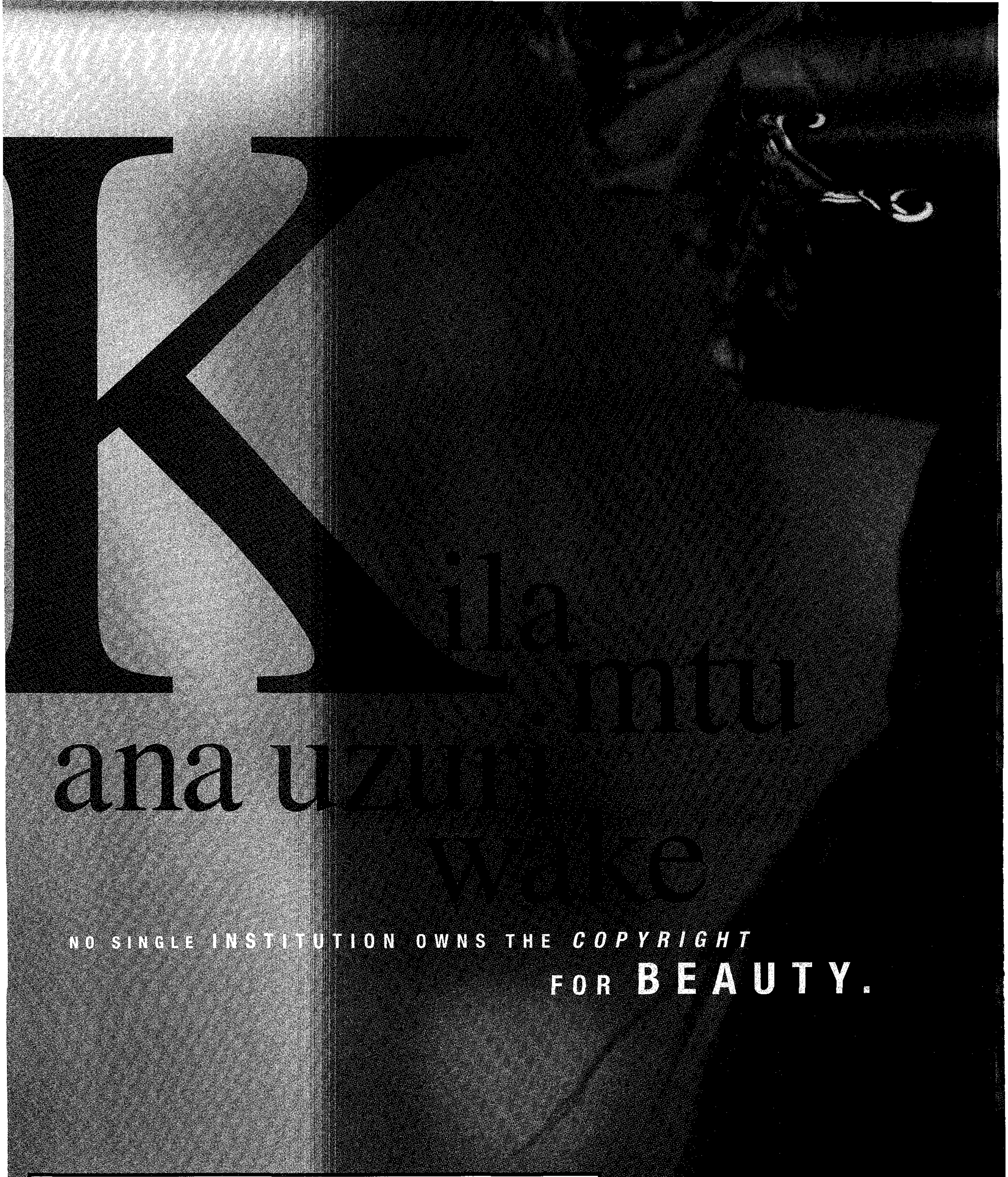
PERHAPS THE BEST THING TO BE SAID FOR WOODY Allen’s new film **Sweet and Lowdown** is that its star, Sean Penn, isn’t doing an impression of the maestro. This is news: In most of Allen’s movies, not only the lead actors but also, in many cases, the lead actresses, are mimicking Woody. In his last film, *Celebrity,* Kenneth Branagh’s mannerisms and speech patterns were so dead-on that he dropped the bottom out of a movie that didn’t have much bottom to begin with. You couldn’t figure out if Branagh’s body jerks and cranky, wheedling nasality were intended affectionately; they seemed cruelly satiric at times, and yet the director, who wields a martinet’s control over his movies, must have endorsed the actor’s riffs. Maybe Allen, world-class narcissist that he is, decided it was better to be dissed than dismissed; any attention is better than none. When he made his previous film, *Deconstructing Harry,* he didn’t need a surrogate; playing a writer who philanders his way through his nasty squall of an existence, he dissed himself, or at least his public image of himself, and many people interpreted the results as scathing self-analysis. But the film wasn’t all that scabrous, really; essentially it was an apologia for a man who can’t function in life, only in art. And as every artist knows, art is more important than life, right?

But it helps if at least there’s some real artistry going on, and most of Allen’s forays into purported self-criticism are less interesting as artworks than as analytic sessions writ large. In *Sweet and Lowdown,* he’s once again presenting for our approval and opprobrium a cad-genius—in this case, Sean Penn’s Emmet Ray, a legendary (fictional) jazz guitarist of the thirties who quickly faded into oblivion. Jamming onstage, Emmet has a blissfully intense look, as if he were living out whole lifetimes with each chordal progression. Offstage, Emmet keeps himself emotionally detached; he derives his greatest solace from shooting rats in a city dump with a .45. In Chicago, when we first see him, he’s not above doing a bit of pimping, and he doesn’t have a particularly chummy rapport with the other jazz players. Women for him are a way to fill out the hours and strut his stuff.

The amorality of the artist is a rich and resonant subject, but what we see of Emmet’s life is too narrowly focused. Except for a brief passage where he talks bitterly about his upbringing, we don’t get any real sense of what formed him, or what he’s reining in. We’re meant to take Emmet as a given, a specimen. *Homo jerkus.* Allen constructs the film as a biopic, with talking heads such as Nat Hentoff and Douglas McGrath, and himself, blathering on about Emmet like the witnesses in *Reds.* What great mysteries of personality are being investigated here? Emmet, as a film subject, can’t support the scrutiny. In a way, despite Penn’s sharp-edged and unsentimental performance and Allen’s unblinking directorial gaze, this guitarist is just as diaphanous as Zelig was. He’s a cipher who’s always just upstaged: Outclassed by the greatness of his idol Django Reinhardt, he’s perpetually second-best; when he arrives with big plans in Hollywood accompanied by Hattie (Samantha Morton), the mute laundress who reveres him, it is *she* who ends up landing big-time movie work (by accident).

Allen invokes his own idols: *Deconstructing Harry* was configured along the lines of *Wild Strawberries,* and *Sweet and Lowdown* is modeled on *La Strada,* with Emmet as a variation on Anthony Quinn’s Zampanò, the strongman who realizes too late the sweet frailty of his waifish adorer. Samantha Morton can be thought of in the same terms as Giuletta Masina’s Gelsomina. Her performance seems inseparable from her personality; both are in a state of grace. Allen had a real chance here to get inside the psychology of a man threatened by such grace, who needs to destroy it, or flee from it, in order to

Photograph by John Clifford/Sony Pictures Classics.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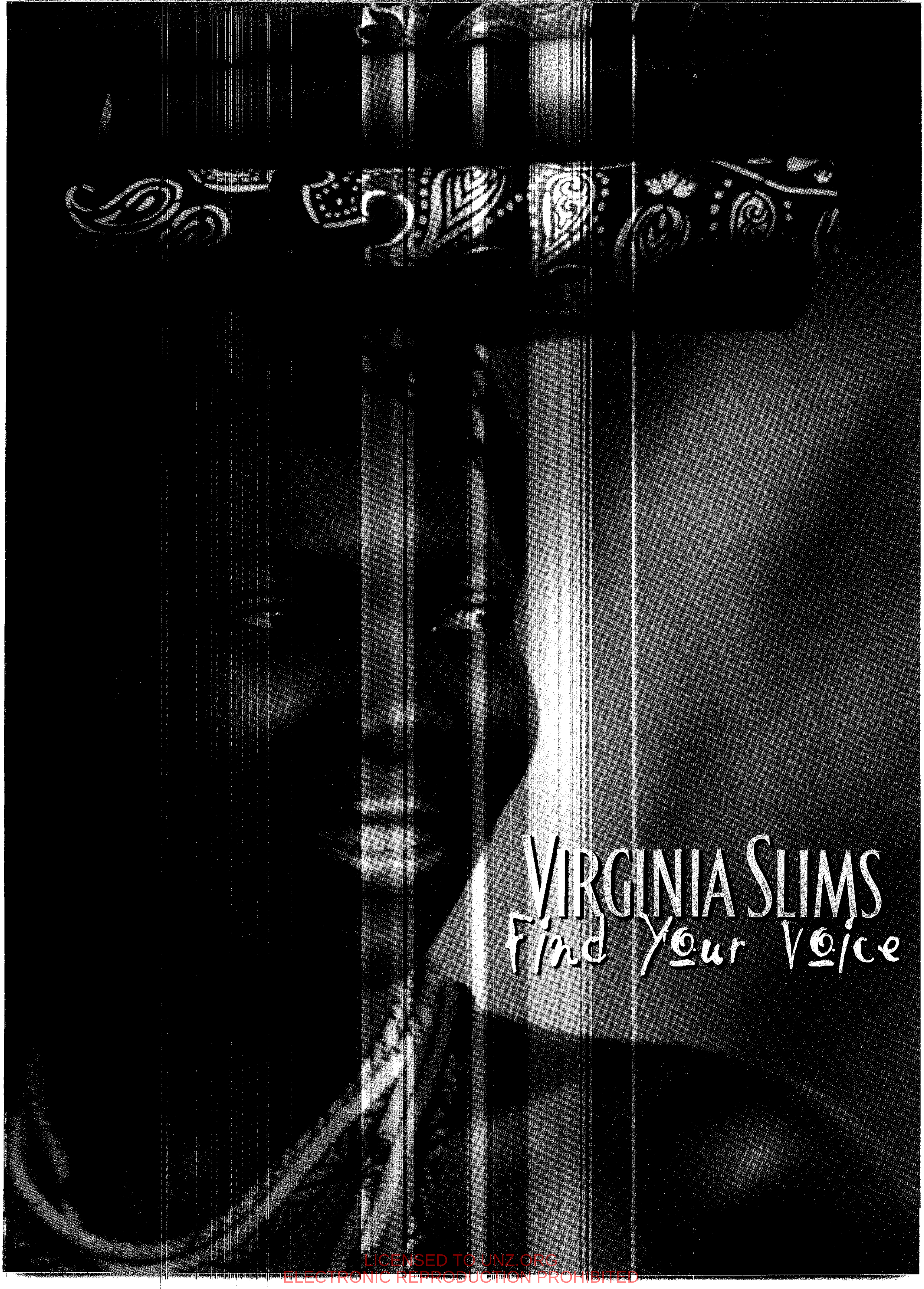
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live with himself. If the director had gone all the way with the material, surely Morton, with her almost preternatural sensitivities, could have made us feel Hattie's every pang of persecution, equal to Lillian Gish's cowering before Donald Crisp in D. W. Griffith's *Broken Blossoms* (the model for *La Strada*). And Penn could certainly have made us feel the full self-loathing behind Emmet's bantam strut. Allen opted instead for something far less passionate: a high gloss on a pet theme.

NEIL JORDAN'S **The End of the Affair** HAS A hushed, spectral atmosphere more appropriate to a horror film than to a period British romance, but the mood is not unsuited to its source, Graham Greene's 1951 sin-and-redemption novel about an acidulous novelist and the wife of a meek civil servant with whom he has a soulful, crazy-making affair. The result is a bit like *Brief Encounter* meets *Tales From the Crypt;* the film has an impressive, and oppressive, weightiness. Ralph Fiennes, as the novelist, seems more animated than usual, maybe because, for a change, he's playing someone who doesn't look drip-dried. Venom becomes him. Julianne Moore, her skin alarmingly alabaster, works up a full repertoire of impassioned sidelong glances; as her poor-soul husband, who spends a fair amount of his time standing umbrellaless in the rain, Stephen Rea wilts impressively.

In brief: IN JANE CAMPION'S **Holy Smoke!**, KATE Winslet may be playing an Australian girl who falls under a guru's spell while traveling in India, but she's the true spellbinder of the piece: Whether her Ruth is smoldering in a sari or cavorting on an emu ranch, Winslet keeps you watching. The film, otherwise something of a botch, is about what happens when Ruth, lured back to her family, squares off with a cult deprogrammer (Harvey Keitel). The sexual politics between them is like *Feminism for Dummies,* and Keitel's held-in performance doesn't credibly account for his transformation from cock of the walk to whimperer. It probably all looked good on paper, but the playing out is something else again. . . . In the marvelous **Toy Story 2**, there's a scene in which Mrs. Potato Head gently counsels Mr. Potato Head as he is about to embark on a dangerous mission that is more observant about how married people act than most of this year's overstuffed live-action "relationship" dramas. In this sequel, Woody and Buzz Lightyear and the rest are joined by a fresh fleet of computer-generated wonders, and the results are so exhilaratingly spry that you leave on a high—a sure sign of an instant classic. ▬

Peter Rainer's 1998–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Mythdemeanors

In 'Marie Christine,' an updated 'Medea,' it's the audience that gets fleeced; 'In the Blood,' an updated 'Scarlet Letter,' almost earns an A.

WHEN MICHAEL JOHN LACHIUSA WORKS IN musical comedy—notably in *Hello Again*, but also elsewhere—he is on safe ground. But he has written that there are no significant differences between the musical and opera, and he has ambitions in that direction, as his current **Marie Christine** strongly suggests. Unfortunately, it is an unholy mess that tosses more unrelated and indigestible things *into* the pot than, if they were tossed *out*, an entire kitchen sink could hold.

LaChiusa wrote the work for Audra McDonald, as a retelling of the Medea story set in turn-of-last-century New Orleans and Chicago. Two things prove immediately and glaringly wrong with his book—or is it libretto? He often cannot find proper new equivalents for the mythical tale: The daughters of Pelias are reduced from 50 to 2, and their killing of their father becomes a brief danced hugger-mugger, too opaque for the uninitiated. The book is so episodic and disjointed, in so many clashing styles, that it suspends more goodwill than disbelief.

The mise-en-scène, by the director-choreographer Graciela Daniele, is equally untidy and confusing. Christopher Barreca's set is a round arena behind which stretches a steeply raked platform, half of which sometimes turns into a set of stairs. Behind it, lampposts may waddle in; above, chandeliers may do a round dance. To the left of the arena is a pie-slice-shaped set of bleachers, where supporting players and chorus members may sit when they're not seated in the auditorium. This is all very grand, but cohabits poorly with supposedly intimate scenes in private rooms, which one stick of furniture surfacing through a trap door sheepishly tries to convey.

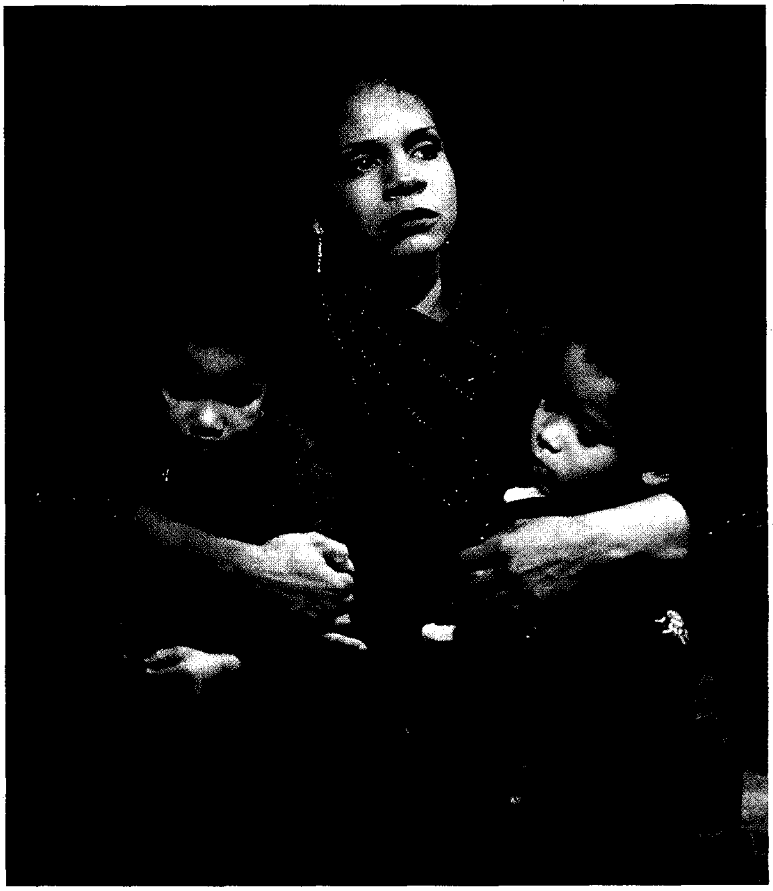
The lighting, by Jules Fisher and Peggy Eisenhauer, is meant to help situate us but often grandly overshoots the mark as it tries to project the misadventures of the Creole beauty Marie Christine with the fickle sea captain Dante Keyes from Chicago onto a cosmic, mythical plane. Her voodoo (or *voudon*) skills are underscored by a drummer, perched high above stage right, who periodically beats out a devil's tattoo.

Presently, a new clashing element obtrudes: a Chicago brothel run by the madam Magdalena, a favorite hangout of Boss Gates's gang. Here Dante, Gates's protégé, is stumping for political office, and also performs a love dance with Gates's daughter Helena, for whom he is dumping Marie Christine. In this dance, the now pathetically pursuing Marie joins in with unintended overtones of a ménage à trois.

Magdalena unwieldily intrudes. In the brothel, she provides crass comic relief, reducing the show to a stale Wildhornish musical. Then she reappears as a supposedly serious character (King Aegeus, in drag, no less) who, in exchange for being made fertile by Marie's magic, promises to get Marie's little boys back to her within a month if only she will yield them up to their father, Dante, who ferociously claims them. How she would manage that we're not told, and Mary Testa's camping as Magdalena drags the show further down. The ineptly conceived murder of the boys is resoundingly anticlimactic.

And the score? In trying to be operatic, LaChiusa, whose lyrics are serviceable, comes up with music that tends to be thwartingly dissonant, indeed chaotic. When it deigns to turn up a melody, it is simplistic and has-beenish. And what pretentiousness! Thus one of Marie's brothers sings a totally out-of-place setting of Jules Laforgue's poem "Complainte de Lord Pierrot" in a French that might as well be Swahili. No wonder Marie promptly stabs him to death.

Audra McDonald is a fine singing actress who, as Marie Christine, does everything vocally and histrionically possible to keep us involved. Anthony Crivello's Dante is less impressive, and the rest are a mixed bag.



Medea darling: Powers Pleasant, Audra McDonald, and Joshua Walter in Michael John LaChiusa's *Marie Christine*.

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

But Toni-Leslie James's costumes are apt and, when required, elegant, and Jonathan Tunick's orchestrations toil valiantly. But such peripheral virtues can no more hold this patchy show together than Band-Aids could Apsyrtus, the chopped-up brother whom the mythic Medea threw in the path of her pursuers. The many previous retellings of the Medea story all strove to tell us more about the troubled heroine; only *Marie Christine* is content to tell us less.

SUZAN-LORI PARKS'S PLAYS HAVE BEEN ECcentric, attitudinizing, overambitious. So were her statements about them—e.g., this, in *Bomb* magazine: "My plays are like these [Oberammergau] passion plays where the community comes together to re-enact the passion of whomever." The passion of whomever was there all right, but closer to the Ontological-Hysterical than to Oberammergau.

In her latest, **In the Blood**, Parks has her characters clumsily voice their interior monologues in spotlighted "confessions," and Hester La Negrita's five young bastards, always near starvation under a megalopolitan bridge, are played by the same adult actors who portray their fathers and Hester's various tormentors. These include the black preacher, father of her youngest; an unfeeling white doctor; a white girlfriend who dragged Hester into drugs and porn exhibitions; and a callous black welfare lady who got Hester involved in a threesome with her husband.

The thrust here isn't so much antiracist as pro-feminist, and Hester herself, whose knowledge of the alphabet stops at the letter *A*, is Parks's take on Hester Prynne. The play itself is Parks's updating of *The Scarlet Letter,* as, upon seeing it, you might easily not have guessed. Hester is somewhat shiftless, but she does provide food for her children (we're not told how) while denying it to herself (we're not told how she survives).

Nevertheless, the good news is that the stylization largely works, and that a recognizably human story is told. As Hester, Charlayne Woodard gives an affecting performance, unaffected even when she is forced to deliver overpoetic lines. However down-and-out and ragged, this Hester maintains a lambent dignity. Rob Campbell, Gail Grate, Bruce MacVittie, and Deirdre O'Connell do justice to their widely divergent dual roles, and only Reggie Montgomery hams it up under David Esbjornson's otherwise acceptable direction. If Parks's next play marks an advance similar to the one *In the Blood* does over its predecessors, it should be eagerly anticipated. ▬

John Simon's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

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ART **MARK STEVENS**

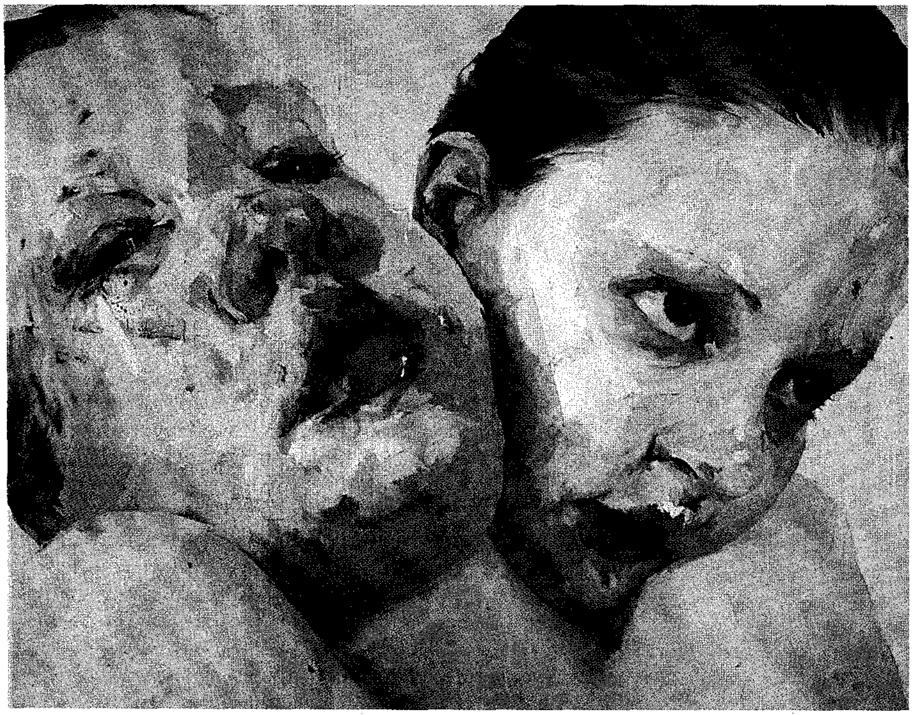
Fresh Meat

The paintings of Jenny Saville, the latest prodigy from the Freud-Bacon school of British fleshmongers, amount to a kind of anti-advertising.

THE ELEPHANT DUNG MAY HAVE GENERATED THE headlines at the "Sensation" show in Brooklyn, but the nudes of **Jenny Saville**—which are also part of the Brooklyn show—are attracting the most comment among painters. The vogue the 29-year-old English artist is enjoying is not simply the result of talent; many artists as skillful with the brush are routinely ignored. Nor is it a matter of her being more or less original. Saville is deeply indebted to other English artists, notably Lucian Freud, yet is not chastised for being derivative. She is flourishing because she has found a way—in her treatment of large nudes—to give form to powerful underlying expectations in the art world about both art and the body.

"Territories" is the title of her current exhibition at the Gagosian Gallery in SoHo. The word aptly evokes the rolling fields of corpulent flesh that fill her paintings (and give new meaning to the phrase *fat of the land*). In this show, which runs until December 18, she is presenting five paintings of nudes and one close-up of the heads of two children. Like Freud in his late pictures of disturbingly large people, Saville forces the viewer to confront, not just observe, the bare facts. She will often cant the perspective of a painting until the bodies seem to rise above the eye like unstable mountains. The paint itself seems pungent, giving every bruise, pucker, and sore a physical presence. But Saville also differs from Freud in ways that meet the demands of contemporary taste. If Freud is regarded as an old-fashioned realist and easel painter—despite his sexually fraught subject matter—Saville is viewed as an artist entirely in keeping with her times. She works from images rather than models, giving her art a touch of the photographic. She has a feeling for today's scale; she seems less an easel painter than a maker of baroque billboards. Her brushwork is lighter, looser, and more melodramatic than Freud's; there is even some pink playfulness—a touch of rococo—in her work. Traditional realism is challenged when she occasionally employs varying points of view in the same picture (the figures themselves are often composites of several bodies) or calls heightened attention to purely formal concerns. In one picture, the side of a figure is a painterly white smear; in another, an abstract geometric form carves into the space. A contemporary mind will also be conscious that she is a woman painting women—and, often, find her naked grotesques easier to accept than if a man had painted them.

Saville is part of an important tradition of visceral, fleshy painting in twentieth-century British art. Typically, artists working in this tradition—such as Freud and Francis Bacon—emphasize the liveliness of the flesh. An often horrifying liveliness, to be sure, but one whose writhing vitality is unmistakable. What's new in the work of Saville and many of her contemporaries in "Sensation"—notably Damien Hirst, the artist who sliced up the cow—is an obsession with flesh as dead meat. Saville is not a hardcore pathologist; the two children she portrays look like they will survive whatever pustulant diseases of the skin they seem to have contracted. But a cadaverous light does suffuse her brushy work. (She is a kind of joyless Rubens.) In one picture, three intermingled bodies tied with a rope look like a trussed-up Perdue chicken. It is worth asking why artists today—in the United States as well as in Britain—appear entranced by the deathly body. Why is "death" where the life of art now exists? Certainly no painter who celebrates the glory of flesh—rather than its decay—would be much noticed today.



Better than one? Saville's *Hyphen* (1999).

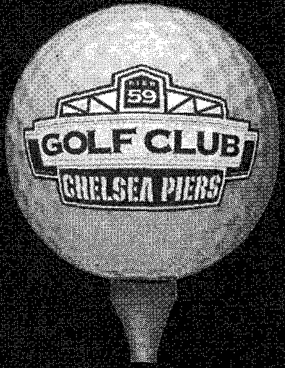
Photograph by Robert McKeever/Gagosian Gallery.

In part, this view of the body simply reflects the old modernist romance—the reverence for the underbelly of existence. But there is a more important explanation. Saville's art is the dark reflection of contemporary fashion. In the mind of many people, the power of the mass media—as they present their array of svelte bodies—creates a lying tyranny of perfected form. What is left for art, then, but to disturb the shiny abstractions of advertising with a gutty touch? To remember that not all bodies are beautiful and to declare, rudely, that in our culture the body is treated as meat? Even the models in the magazines and the talking heads on TV are just something to be consumed. That Saville's work should itself become fashionable, taken up by advertising magnates, is not surprising in this world of mirrors. Her work invites the paradox; it sends contrary signals. She shows off an unflinching eye, but also has a silky brushstroke that's sometimes reminiscent of Sargent. These are not just bodies—they are our body politic.

IN THE PAST TWENTY YEARS, **Thomas Schütte**—a prolific and wide-ranging German artist—has found many different ways to confront and awaken the figural tradition in art. "In Medias Res" at Dia Center for the Arts contains, among other things, four large bronze sculptures of reclining women. They invoke the past without apology—the past of modernist art and sculpture found in Maillol and Matisse, and the past of monumental ancient sculpture. In both cases, the figure is used to express an earthy, almost brutal sense of grandeur, idealism, and timelessness. In contrast to many postmodernists, who engage in easy forms of parody when addressing the high-flown art of the past, Schütte has actually had the courage to work from inside the tradition—and risk the comparisons. None of his figures is just an idea. Each appears handmade, pushed into shape, discovered in the making.

The poses are strong. In one, a seated woman assumes a yogalike position with her arms flung back and her head touching the earth between her legs. Yet her pose does not liberate her: Her body is locked in place. Schütte's figures evoke the transcendent aspirations of the past but cannot escape from the heaviness of the present—which is the heaviness of the earth itself. They are rusting or melting back into their metal, like Henry Moores without the uplift. In Schütte's small ceramic sculptures, many of them gaily colored, the bodies also cannot quite escape from their clay. This is a melancholy but not an arid or wishy-washy art. Schütte's rooted figures take the form of a powerful memory. They are not easily let go. ▬

Mark Stevens's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.



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BALLETTECH

CLASSICAL MUSIC PETER G. DAVIS

She Loves Me

After sixteen years, the Met brings back 'Tristan und Isolde'—one of the most cherished works in the repertory—with mixed, if provocative, results.

Faithful servant: Kurwenal (Richard Paul Fink, right) comforts Tristan (Ben Heppner).

IT WAS NOBLE OF THE METROPOLITAN opera to shelve Wagner's **Tristan und Isolde** for nearly sixteen years, despite this masterwork's central position in the international repertory. Operagoers with long memories will recall some pretty ghastly Met revivals back in the seventies and early eighties, performances populated by raddled sopranos and tenors in extremis who painfully reminded us that the heroic voices necessary for this most challenging of operas no longer seemed to exist. Now, with the recent arrival of Jane Eaglen and Ben Heppner, Wagnerians have taken heart, and the Met has been emboldened to offer these two promising singers in a new production. Other companies may have kept vocally compromised *Tristans* in their repertories, but the Met—which has standards to uphold, having at one time or another presented more great singers in the opera than probably any company in the world—was wise to wait.

If *Tristan* did not return in total triumph, neither was the Met's honor stained, and there was much to admire. Heppner's Tristan may still be a work-in-progress, but the potential for greatness is definitely there. I don't believe I have ever heard this arduous role sung with such lyrical beauty, tonal suavity, and arching expressiveness, proving that a voice of leather is not a prerequisite for Wagnerian survival. Heppner still seems to be searching for the role's dramatic and psychological core; right now his interpretation comes off as rather bland and superficial. Perhaps the necessary declamatory intensity will come in time, and with it the ability to make a full inner surrender to Tristan's darkly feverish, demonic nature.

I was less impressed with Eaglen, who did not sound her best on opening night. Act One went well. The basic quality of her ample soprano was never in doubt, and she successfully communicated much of Isolde's rage, frustration, and cutting sarcasm. In Act Two, though, she seemed to tire, and the rest of her performance was disappointing. By the time the love duet had arrived, the top of her voice had more or less vanished, the overall tone became colorless and drained of expression, there were frequent intonation problems, and most of the text was lost in mushy diction. I have heard Eaglen in far better form than this, although I am bound to report that some colleagues found her stupendous, one even wondering if any soprano had ever sung Isolde better. *Hello?* Even if ignorance is now bliss in matters of performance history, has Birgit Nilsson already become a forgotten singer of the past? Lehmann, Nordica, Fremstad, Leider, Flagstad, Traubel, Varnay, and Mödl were just a few of the notable sopranos who sang Isolde at the Met between 1886 and 1960, and most of them left plentiful recorded mementos to indicate just how far Eaglen still has to go.

Both Heppner and Eaglen are, not to put too fine a point on it, large people, and it is difficult to tell how much that reality dictated director Dieter Dorn's approach to his staging of the opera. The two lovers are kept virtually motionless all evening—they even become invisible during most of their big duet—while the action around them is severely stylized. I have a feeling that this sense of stasis only further inhibits Heppner, who can command a stage with grace and imagination. Eaglen, on the other hand, seems physically unable to make the necessary movements to create a plausible character, relying on vocal means alone to make theatrical points. With two such static protagonists at its very center, this production of *Tristan* often gives the impression of a staged concert performance, and the direction is such that the dramatic effect is unlikely to be much different if and when the title roles are performed by more agile singers.

Even so, this is still a thoughtful, often provocative production. Jürgen Rose's *(continued on page 100)*

Photograph by Beatriz Schiller.

TELEVISION **JOHN LEONARD**

Outta Sight

HBO and Showtime both look at the federal witness-protection program and report that being invisible isn't the same thing as being free.

What's your point? Forest Whitaker (left) and Tom Sizemore in HBO's *Witness Protection*.

TOWARD THE END OF **Witness Protection** (SATURDAY, December 11; 8 to 9:45 P.M.; HBO), we are told that a government program started in 1970 by the Nixon administration with the idea of accommodating maybe 40 people a year now enlists more than 600 annually; that there are some 16,000 Americans out there somewhere under assumed names and counterfeit identities, a ghost colony of turncoats, tattletales and/or whistle-blowers, and their wives and children, an archipelago of cover stories. I find it hard to attach a meaning to these numbers. They float, but they do not signify, in a foggy paranoia. In Manhattan alone, there would seem to be at least as many nail salons. Greater numbers go to prison every month, or claim to have been abducted by aliens, or download pornography from the World Wide Web. And the program itself, promising safe passage to a fresh start for those who turn state's evidence in federal cases prosecutors really care about, must have shown up 16,000 times as a plot device in TV movies and serials. What does this do to our understanding of heretofore honorable concepts like "sanctuary" and "asylum"?

Witness Protection, inspired by Robert Sabbag's authorized-access, inside-the-underground article in *The New York Times Magazine,* wants to assure us that a safe passage isn't a free ride. That after the Feds have found you a house and bought you some furniture and helped with an allowance to meet a few of your start-up costs, you will have to get a job. That you'll have to get that job on your own because they are not about to fake a résumé suggesting that you're an engineer or a heart surgeon (or even a lawyer), when all you've ever really been is a middle-management bullyboy in the mob, a switch on the cokehead circuit board, a soldier in the militia, or a hood in the Klan, who just happens to know enough to make your selling out worth the price, after which you're still a snitch. And that all of this will be very hard on your family, who may not have been aware of your criminal activities and who were certainly accustomed to a higher standard of living.

So meet Bobby Batton (Tom Sizemore), who has been skimming from the Boston mob. And his incredulous wife, Cindy (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio), who seems never to have wondered where the money came from for their two Cadillacs. And his indignant son, Sean (Shawn Hatosy), who'll never get into Harvard if he has to go to public high school. And his 5-year-old daughter, Suzie (Skye McCole Bartusiak), the Tiny Tim in this dysfunctional family. When someone rats out Bobby, and his bosses put out a contract on him, his only option is to rat right back at them, to the Feds. But before the Battons disappear forever (Seattle is mentioned), they have to undergo a working week of indoctrination, "redocumentation," and psychological counseling in a safe house that becomes, before our increasingly interested eyes, a castle out of Kafka: windowless, of course, with electric locks, video surveillance cameras, and Forest Whitaker.

Whitaker plays U.S. marshal Steve Beck as a combination of orthopedic gym teacher, boot-camp drill instructor, group therapist, and stepfather confessor. One of his eyes is slow (a calendar), and the other is fast (a clock). His whole being, in fact, moves at two different speeds, as if the mind were impatient to get on to something worthier of its exertions while the body has been weighed down with the bad news a long past has lumped on it. It is an amazing performance. We learn absolutely nothing about his personal life but somehow absorb his empathy, his weariness and his restlessness, even as he is showing the Battons glossy *(continued on page 125)*

Photograph by Ron Batzdorff/HBO.

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Take the Fifth

Jack's Fifth, hidden just across from the Plaza hotel, acquits itself well on all counts; also, a Vongerichten alum heats up Lower East Side eats.

MARILYN MONROE HAD A CHIN IMPLANT. Archibald Leach changed his name. Clint Eastwood shut up. When New York City declined to fall for Pondicherry's act—a dimwitted global menu under the politically louche rubric of French Colonial cooking—its bruised overseas Indian owners pulled the plug. They trundled the wicker veranda furniture away, tossed the turmeric and cardamom in the garbage, hired a cabal of consultants, and assigned designer Larry Bogdanow to do a speedy makeover. The upshot is **Jack's Fifth**. Jack's "because it sounds so American," says managing partner Suvir Saran. Fifth as in Avenue, just steps away.

With the reflective amber sheen of what they're calling the Glow Bar—coffee by day, spirits after dark—Jack's team hopes we'll see once and for all that its entry is not the Paris Theatre's waiting lounge. Alas, there's no avoiding the daunting stairs to what is, no way to disguise it, a cellar. Though we may work ourselves into a lather at the gym every day, it's tough to coax us downstairs for dinner. Downtown, yes. Downstairs, ugh. I urge you to force yourself. You'll stop moaning when you see the warm elegance of the coffered silver-leafed ceiling, the high-backed booths in handsome woven padding, the dramatic tropical bouquet at the center—sophisticated setting for Cole Porter, Gershwin, and Coltrane in the background. (The dreary fifties photos, Jacks of all trades, will have been banished by now, I am told.)

Jumpin' Jack: A booth at Jack's Fifth; opposite, chef Herb Wilson's lump-crabmeat salad.

Settle in and rediscover Herb Wilson's bright, not annoyingly tricky, seasonally inspired cooking. A skilled journeyman, Wilson has been playing the field for twenty years—from the River Café, Hubert's, and Le Refuge to an earlier Jack's, Zut!, and box-office boffo at Bambou. Wisely, he's been made a partner as well. That may cure his wanderlust. Does the menu seem overfamiliar? As Wilson observes, "New York food is market-driven." All chefs have access to the same fattened duck livers, the same pampered leaves and sprigs, the latest heirloom beet and potato. Not one creative squiggle on a plate, not a single gush of foam, not even the clever resurrection of some abandoned fixture of the fifties is unique for more than a week.

But there is something especially winning about Wilson's way with the autumn-1999 inevitables—his roasted-beet salad, the tangy lump crabmeat with avocado, his caramelized diver scallops with couscous, savory oxtails (that ought to be an entrée), the first-rate herb-crusted rack of lamb, a really pristine and carefully cooked halibut, the excellent steak in Barolo sauce, and his sensational Zinfandel-braised short ribs with parsnip purée. His dishes seem simpler, cleaner, less all-over-the-world-on-one-plate. Even a chef's welcome, shrimp on a smidgen of saffron risotto, zings with a chorus of flavors. At the moment when some chefs might send out a citric ice as a palate clearer, Wilson offers an artery rush in a demitasse of creamy clam chowder. That adds a sense of generosity in a dinner that might run $150 for two (dinner entrées, $17 to $31) with a fine red from a brief but intelligent list. We loved the intense '96 Penfolds Cabernet Shiraz at $39.

The only way to escape November's roasted squash (or pumpkin soup) is to get lost in Chinatown, but Wilson's curry-touched butternut-squash soup has real oomph and toasted pepitas. The too-mushy hazelnut-crusted foie gras may no longer be an issue now that he's changed purveyors. My guests seem impressed by his revival of that seventies nouvelle cuisine darling, the seafood sausage, an early love object for me though familiarity ultimately bred lasting indifference. The farm chicken, with chanterelles and leeks in a port-wine glaze, is a shade overcooked. And though I must have my salmon rare, tonight Wilson has gone too far—the applewood-smoked salmon, so deliciously teamed with green lentils and bacon in a red-wine fumet, is not even

(continued on page 90)

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

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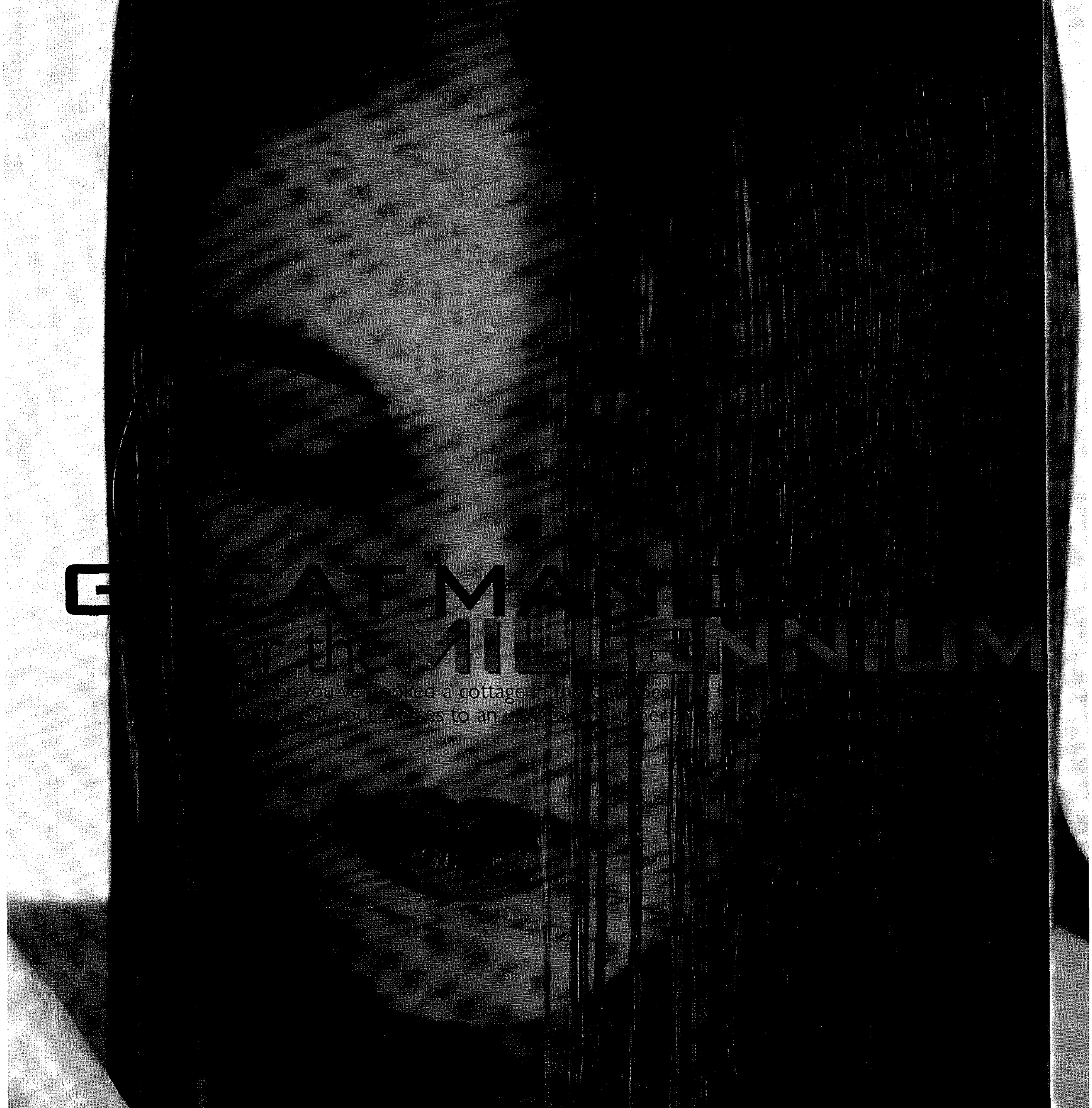

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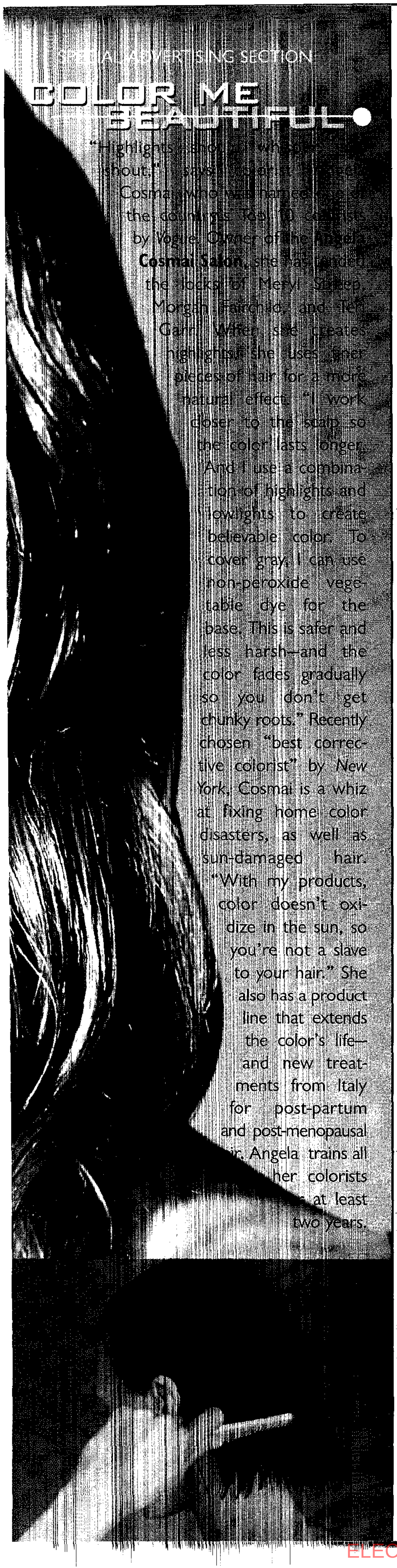
Angela Cosmai Salon



SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

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"Highlights should whisper, not shout," says colorist Angela Cosmai who was named one of the country's Top 10 colorists by *Vogue*. Owner of the Angela **Cosmai Salon**, she has tended the locks of Meryl Streep, Morgan Fairchild, and Teri Garr. When she creates highlights, she uses finer pieces of hair for a more natural effect. "I work closer to the scalp so the color lasts longer. And I use a combination of highlights and lowlights to create believable color. To cover gray, I can use non-peroxide vegetable dye for the base. This is safer and less harsh—and the color fades gradually so you don't get chunky roots." Recently chosen "best corrective colorist" by *New York*, Cosmai is a whiz at fixing home color disasters, as well as sun-damaged hair. "With my products, color doesn't oxidize in the sun, so you're not a slave to your hair." She also has a product line that extends the color's life—and new treatments from Italy for post-partum and post-menopausal hair. Angela trains all her colorists for at least two years.

Cue

What are the new films and where are they playing?
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Music under the stars or on the stage?
How about a comedy club for a few laughs?
Want to be moved by classical art or avant garde art?
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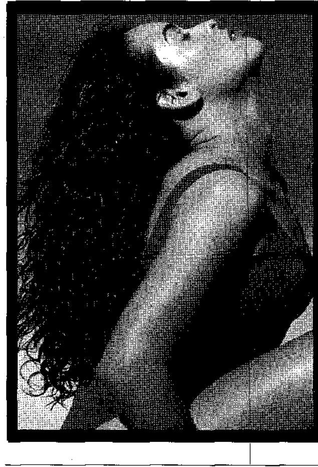

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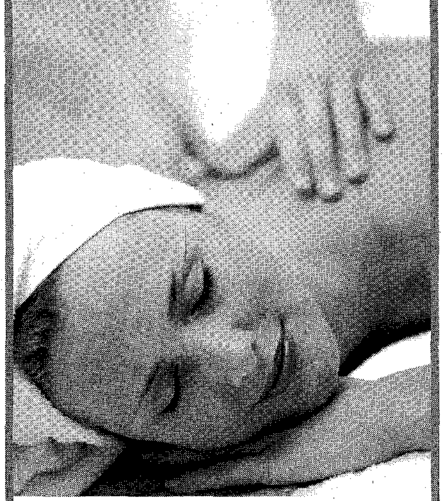
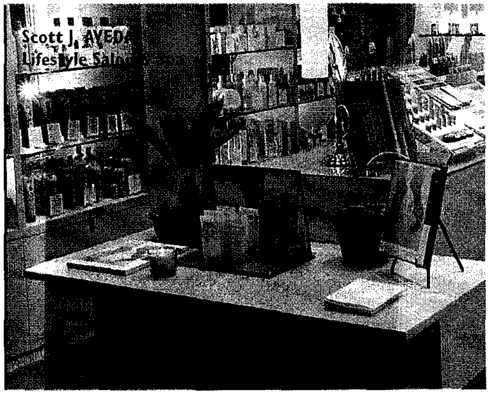




Scott J. AVEDA
Lifestyle Salo

Riccardo Maggio

Hair Fashions East
by George Buckn

HAVE IT YOUR WAY

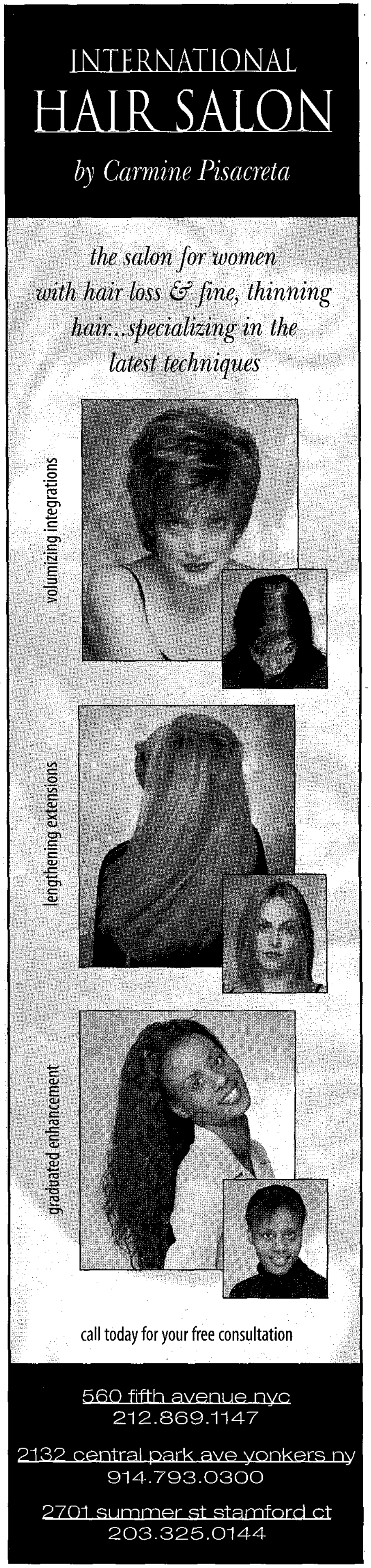
"For the year 2000, everything is about customization," says Hauns, Artistic Director of **Scott J. AVEDA Lifestyle Salon & Spa.** "It's about bringing wellness and beauty from within outward–in everything from our salon and spa treatments to our manicures. When we're styling hair, we work with our clients' natural texture and inner beauty, allowing it to flow. Color will be customized, so it's bold, but also with a natural feel and lots of shimmer. Makeup has a natural look but with lots of shine–on the face, on the eyes, and on the lips." Currently popular at Scott J: "Hair is stepping back to the eighties," notes Hauns. "We're doing shattered edges, going from shorter to longer for a soft feeling. It's a multi-textured dual look that's accented with color. With brown hair, for example, we might have red undertones, and when the hair moves, we catch a glimpse of red. The color should have incredible shine and not scream at you, but sneak up on you. We use AVEDA color, which is 97% organic and gives an incredible shine. Since the color is very realistic–it follows natural tones–it gives us the flexibility we need to create a look that's natural, but with an element of surprise."

HIGH STYLE LOW MAINTENANCE

Though clients travel from around the world to get pampered at the **Riccardo Maggiore Salon,** most of the salon's clients are busy New Yorkers with little time for an extensive beauty regimen. So the salon specializes in creating fashionable looks that are tailored to the client's personality, facial features, and lifestyle. Riccardo explains: "Most of our clients have extremely busy schedules, and they want looks that can go from a workout, to the office, to a night out, with little effort." For this reason, the salon's experts take the time to consult with clients, to learn about their lifestyles and personality in order to develop looks that are right for them. The hair specialist creates the right style by considering hair texture and color, skin tone, and facial features. When you make an appointment for color and cut, expect to consult with your stylist and colorist and expect them to consult with each other. They work closely together to make sure that color and cut are complementary. And while you're at the salon, take advantage of their eyebrow-shaping specialists, who use a combination of waxing and tweezing, depending on client preference, skin type, and needs. Says Riccardo: "Creating the right look takes time. We do not rush our work and this makes the client's experience pleasurable."

TAMING THE FRIZZIES

Some women wish they could safely get rid of every bit of frizz and curl. Others just want to get those waves under control. **Hair Fashions East by George Buckner** does it all. Says owner George Buckner: "If you want curly or extra wavy hair that looks shiny and healthy, I have non-drying preparations to help you do this–because ordinary gels and mousses can be drying, especially if your hair is color treated. But if you want a sleek straight style, we can successfully and safely remove excess curl or frizz. The curl can simply be loosened–or straightened completely. The relaxer system we use is completely different from anyone else's–and we have a pre- and post-relaxing system, as well as an excellent customized home care maintenance program to maintain healthy hair." In colder weather, the frizzies are somewhat tamer, Buckner points out. But keep in mind that they will run rampant if you travel to a warmer climate without taking preventive measures. The salon also treats various scalp problems as well as hair damaged by overprocessing due to coloring or relaxing. "We use the finest products from France, England, and the United States," notes Buckner.



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FROM PARIS WITH STYLE

"One of the newest looks from Paris is our `Midsummer Night's Dream' haircut and style," says Linda of **Jacques Dessange.** "It's a romantic style that combines sleek and curly hair, with smooth roots that flow into small tight, curls around the face. For mischievous allure, the style is finished with highlighted tips, then glossed with Jacques Dessange Shining Milk." Blonde hair has always been seductive, but the Dessange colorists now give it new dimension. "For trendy hippies, our California Blonde is blonder at the tips," says Estelle, "and the root is enhanced with a slide of golden henna lotion. Impish locks seem less innocent with our spicy new Saffron Blonde. Our Polar Blonde is very sophisticated, enhanced with glints of platinum and displayed to perfection on a finely chiseled bob with ice-sharp tips." For longer and thicker hair, Dessange's celebrity hairstylist, Bo, uses extensions to create a glamorous new look. And if you have frizzy curls, Deanne can give you fashionably straight hair that's shiny and healthy looking.

FEELIN' HOT, HOT, HOT

"Ash and other drab tones are out for winter," says hair designer Franco Pulice of the **Gloria Cabrera Hair Salon and Spa.**" I like lots of hot red tones; they're fashionable, brilliant—and they flatter the face." As for hair lengths, "they're like hemlines," Gloria explains. "Long or short doesn't matter, as long as it's fun and low maintenance, with soft lines and lots of movement." Curly or straight? "That, too, is up to you, but in general, hair is worn flatter. If it's curly, it's scrunched closer to the head. The looks are narrow and not so full. Long hair is straight, laminated; the ends are soft, not blunt." Hair is finished with a molding mud that brings out the definition in a cut. "Biolage is popular, especially for shorter hair. The hair is lightened and then toned with an appropriate shade. Whether you want a favorite haircut upgraded or a complete new look, you can count on the expert stylists at Cabrera, which was named one of the country's Top 40 salons by *Glamour*.

CARE FOR YOUR HAIR

Unless you have very oily hair, don't shampoo every day—especially if you color to cover gray. Brush hair often to distribute oil through to the ends—but never brush wet hair. Don't be heavy-handed with hair grooming products. Use a clarifying shampoo to get rid of buildup. To dry curly hair, mix a little leave-in conditioner with gel, then twist the hair with your finger to enhance the curl. If a Caribbean holiday or a winter cruise is on your calendar, wear a hat in the sun and/or use a protective hair care product with a high SPF.

WHAT'S IN

Longer hair
Long layers
Well-shaped, one-length hair
Hair that looks healthy
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Brilliant color

DEFINITELY OUT

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HAIR REMOVAL
• HAIR REPLACEMENT

How do the stars make sure there's no unsightly facial fuzz when the camera zooms in for a closeup? They zap it with the EpiLight™ photo-epilation system, which uses pulsating light to alter the hair—so that regrowth is virtually eliminated. How do they get rid of sun damage and keep that fresh, healthy glow? With **completely bare**'s Enhanced Micro-Dermabrasion, which uses micro crystals to smooth out the skin and erase fine lines. "It's like 20 facials in one," says Cindy Barshop, owner of completely bare. And how do they look years younger without surgery? With completely bare's Techno-Facelift, which utilizes mini-currents to stimulate and exercise facial muscles—which smooth and lift the skin. You'll look years younger in an hour. This Madison Avenue spaprovides results in a beautiful, relaxed setting. All consultations are complimentary.

"Almost 30 million women in this country suffer from hair loss," explains Elline Surianello, President/client of the **LeMetric HairReplacement Center for Women.** "There is no medical cure because it is a condition, not an illness. It wreaks havoc on a woman's sexuality. I recognized that 15 years ago, because to my knowledge, I'm the only hair replacement specialist who actually has the condition known as Androgenetic Alopecia. Like other women I felt shamed and de-feminized by my appearance. I developed LeMetric Systems over 15 years ago to help myself, and now we have women coming to us from all over the country. These women know who we are—and now we're even more accessible with our Web site. We are the only ones who specialize in hair replacement for women only. We do our own design, our own manufacturing and installation on the premises."

"Everything now is about length and volume," says Michelle Cipriano, President of **MHN Hair Now.** "And we can give you that, regardless of how much or how little hair you have. With our newest technique, 'Star Strands,' strands of human hair are applied to your own. It works with hair that's short—or hair that's long, but lacking in volume. It requires no daily maintenance. You can shampoo the hair, perm it, cut it shorter. It's fun and it's beautiful. We can also eliminate bald spots using a different technique. We offer individualized solutions for every problem." For women who have had plastic surgery and are left with a lack of hair around the scars, MHN Hair Now has a Board Certified cosmetic surgeon who is skilled at transplanting single hairs to the scarred area and restoring the volume that was there before the surgery. MHN services are also available for men.

"Women come to us for a number of reasons," says Angelo David Pisacreta of the **International Hair Salon.** "Perhaps their hair has been overprocessed, so it breaks or falls out. The hair might be thinning, either because of medication or because it's genetic. Maybe they've cut their hair short and want long hair again. Or perhaps they simply don't have enough hair for the styles they'd like to wear. We solve those problems." At the International Hair Salon, women with thinning and problem hair will find a variety of solutions that include hair extensions, volumizing techniques, weaving-bonding, scalp treatments, and custom-made wigs. The contemporary 2000 square foot space provides private treatment rooms, as well as such traditional services as haircutting, styling, and highlights, specifically adapted to create fashionable looks for women with thin and problem hair.

For years Dino Dondiego of **Sequence** has been telling the world about his unique Hair Blending® technique—how good it looks and feels, how much freedom of styling it allows. "But I have discovered," he says, "that the best way to demonstrate a superior product and superior service is for the client to actually experience it. So I'm inviting anyone with thinning hair to visit Sequence. I'll blend real hair in between your hair and let you brush it, shake it, wet it, style and spray it—anything you would do at home. Only then can you see how different Hair Blending® is. It's not a wig, not an extension. We use one real hair at a time, adding a little more volume wherever it's needed. The result is a natural look that gives clients the ability to wear the styles they like."

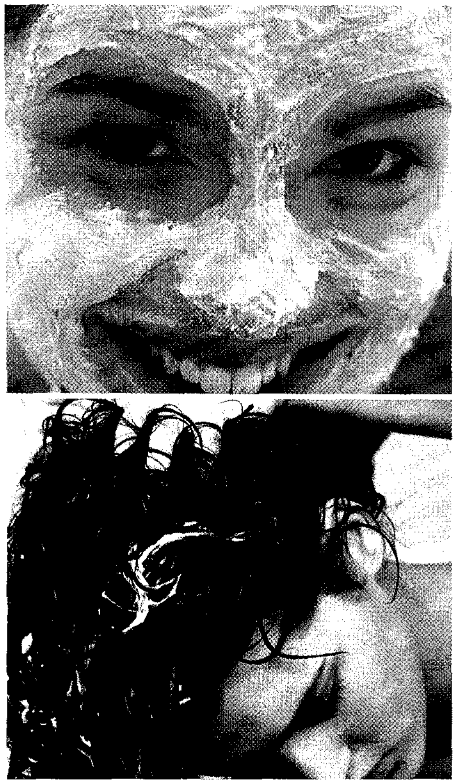
GO GET THE LOOK

Angela Cosmai Salon, 16 W. 55th St., 2nd Floor., 541-5820; 1701 Post Road East, Westport, CT, 203-259-5909. Along with her team of experts, Angela Cosmai has opened a new salon in Westport, CT. Angela's patented highlighting technique will give you the healthiest, most believable color you've ever had. Call for your complimentary consultation or appointment.

completely bare, 764 Madison Ave. (between 65th and 66th streets; Suite 3R), 717-9300. Complimentary consultation for the Enhanced Micro-Dermabrasion, Techno-Facelift and EpiLight™ photo-epilation system of hair removal.

Eiji, 768 Madison Ave. (between 65th and 66th streets), 2nd Floor, 570-1151. Come in for a complimentary consultation with one of the salons top stylists. Ask your hair care questions and learn which cut and color are right for you. Ask about special services for parties and weddings.

Gloria Cabrera Hair Salon and Spa, 605 Fifth Ave. (between 48th and 49th streets), 750-0808. With every haircut and framing ($120), a free mini-facial; with lowlights with three colors ($175), a free 45-minute massage; with full head highlights ($155), a free spa pedicure; 15% off permanent make-up services. Gift certificates available. Visit www.feelgoodny.com. for more promotions. Open Sunday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Hair Fashions East by George Buckner, 411 Park Ave. South (between 28th and 29th streets Suite 2A), 686-7524, www.HairFashionsEast.com. Bring in our ad for a 10% discount. In-house specials and gift certificates available year-round.

International Hair Salon, 560 Fifth Ave. (corner 46th St.) 869-1147; 2701 Summer St., Stamford, CT, 203-325-0144; 2132 Central Park Ave., Yonkers, NY, 914-793-0300. Come in for a complimentary consultation with Angelo David Pisacreta and his staff. They will be happy to answer all your questions.

Jacques Dessange, 505 Park Ave. (between 59th and 60th streets), 308-1400;www.dessangeny.com. With any haircut or color, enhance your new look; enjoy a complimentary makeup session with Dani. Ask about the salon's gift certificates and holiday packages.

LeMetric HairReplacement Center for Women, 124 E. 40th St., Suite. 601, 986-5620, 1-800-217-9052; www.lemetric. com. They specialize in helping women who have thinning hair or hair loss. All the center's hair systems—permanent or temporary—are custom designed to the client's specific needs.

MHN Hair Now, 515 Madison Ave., 832-0707. Come in for a complimentary consultation and see the center's remarkable techniques for yourself. Seeing is believing! If you like, you can even talk to some of the clients they've served during 30 years.

Riccardo Maggiore Salon, 18 W. 56th St., off 5th Ave., 586-6482. With any cut or color, receive your choice of a complimentary eyebrow shaping, manicure, or product from the Riccardo Maggiore Hair Care line.

Scott J. AVEDA Lifestyle Salon & Spa, 257 Columbus Ave. (at 72nd St.), 769-0107; 2929 Broadway, 666-6429; www.scotts.com. After any service, enjoy a complimentary makeup touch-up. You can choose to have your own basic makeup updated—or they'll give you a brand new look for the year 2000. Ask about gift certificates.

Sequence, 1-888-BLEND-88; www.sequencehair.com. We invite *New York* readers to call for a complimentary demonstration. Experience for yourself how natural and comfortable Hair Blending® is.

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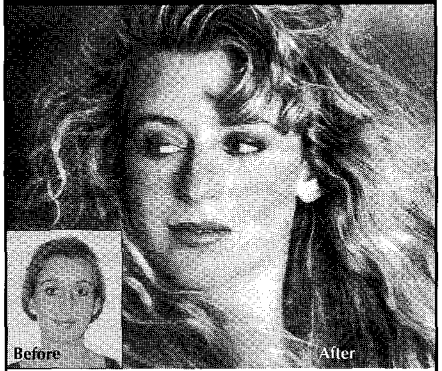

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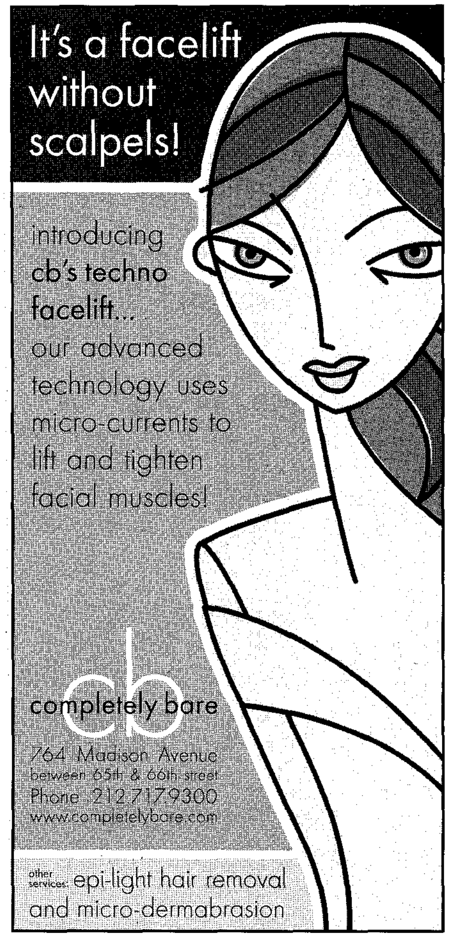

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Friday, December 10th, at 9:00 am
Wednesday, December 15th, at 1:00 pm
Friday, December 17th, at 9:00 am

TIME WARNER CABLE MANHATTAN Channel 35,
Saturday, December 11th, at 8:30 pm

Greene *continued from page 80*

warm in the middle. The sophisticated complexity of plum-hazelnut tart with fig-Armagnac ice cream, the chocolate tasting, a small old-fashioned apple pie, or one night's mascarpone-layered spice cake with black-walnut ice cream and a Seckel pear are the irresistible creations of a veteran, too, Heather Carlucci, fresh from a three-star stint at JUdson Grill.

"I'm a late bloomer," Wilson says. "I was an overage debutante always taking the wrong date to the prom. Here, at last, I have latitude to do what I want." Suddenly that flight of stairs seems like no big deal at all.

Jack's Fifth, 8 West 58th Street (212-750-7474). Lunch, Monday through Saturday noon to 2 P.M. Dinner, Monday through Saturday 6 to 11 P.M. All major credit cards.

ALL SORTS OF SMART AND ECCENTRIC LITTLE shops are waking up Stanton and Ludlow Streets, but no one I know has been haunting the Lower East Side for even a junior epiphany at dinner. Still, I cannot resist the lure of a Jean-Georges sapling. We drive past Katz's Deli on Houston down a dismal stretch of Clinton looking for a stainless-steel façade. "There's no sign," we've been warned. There it is, just past the pack of rowdies standing in front of the First Choice Barber Shop, across from La Nueva Mini Market. It's **71 Clinton Fresh Food**—a solitary oasis of gentrification. It feels like nowheresville to me, but to Vongerichten apostle Wylie Dufresne, it's like coming home. He grew up in the East Village. "I'm two blocks from my high school," he marvels. And his dad, Dewey—he's the grown-up schmoozing guests—lives around the corner. He and one of his landlords are partners here.

There are only 30 seats (the two next to the door come with an apology), and the neighborhood, thrilled to have uptown ambition at such modest prices, keeps them turning. Behind the bar is Che Guevera (long black curlicues of hair, not quite sideburns, not quite Hasidic curls) mixing drinks and dispensing fabulous passion-fruit rum punch. For the moment, all wines come by the glass (with directions for what complements which dish), and there seem to be almost as many servers as customers. Essential, says the chef. "We have no heat lamps, and we need to rush the food to the table." That's why dishes arrive one or two at a time.

To spy Wylie with his lone sous-chef through the pass-through is to admire their high-wire act even more. Starters can be a bit skimpy, as is the grilled-octopus confit with quinoa and the foie gras lump inside its apple ring, but most everything is delicious, if not amazing at these prices (entrées, $14 to $20). Rustic braised rabbit on poppy-seed tagliatelle, the tangy bits of Scottish salmon exquisitely cocooned in avocado slices, and a fragrant hill of brilliantly dressed baby leaves and herbs with chunks of fig and Parmesan shards are my three favorites.

Our waiter sashays by, tossing his ponytail as if he were Little Miss America, and stops to inquire, "How are the flavors?" It's an admirably original substitute for the annoying "How's everything?" The answer is "exciting." Especially the remarkable black sea bass crusted with a crunch of edamame and rye-bread crumbs on chive mashed potatoes, the seared scallops on black-olive risotto cake, and the beer-braised short ribs paired with hanger steak. Wylie is a happy camper now, but it will be a challenge to keep him downtown on the farm, once the big-time talent scouts come sniffing around.

Desserts are a letdown. At the next table, three friends share an order of Stilton and Bosc-pear terrine that should lose its weird black-pepper caramel. Indeed, Stilton and pear not wrapped around each other might be even better. It's getting late, but as they leave, another trio settles in beside us—boys from the 'hood, one in a fedora, the other in a porkpie, rubbing his hands in anticipation. Grateful to spy an empty taxi, we rush outside. He refuses to take four and drives off with Dufresne senior racing after. "I'll get his number," he cries. Fresh food. Fresh service.

71 Clinton Fresh Food, 71 Clinton Street (212-614 6960). Dinner, Monday through Thursday 6 to 10:45 P.M., Friday and Saturday till 11:45 P.M. A.E. (Mastercard and Visa will be added soon.) ■

Gael Greene's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

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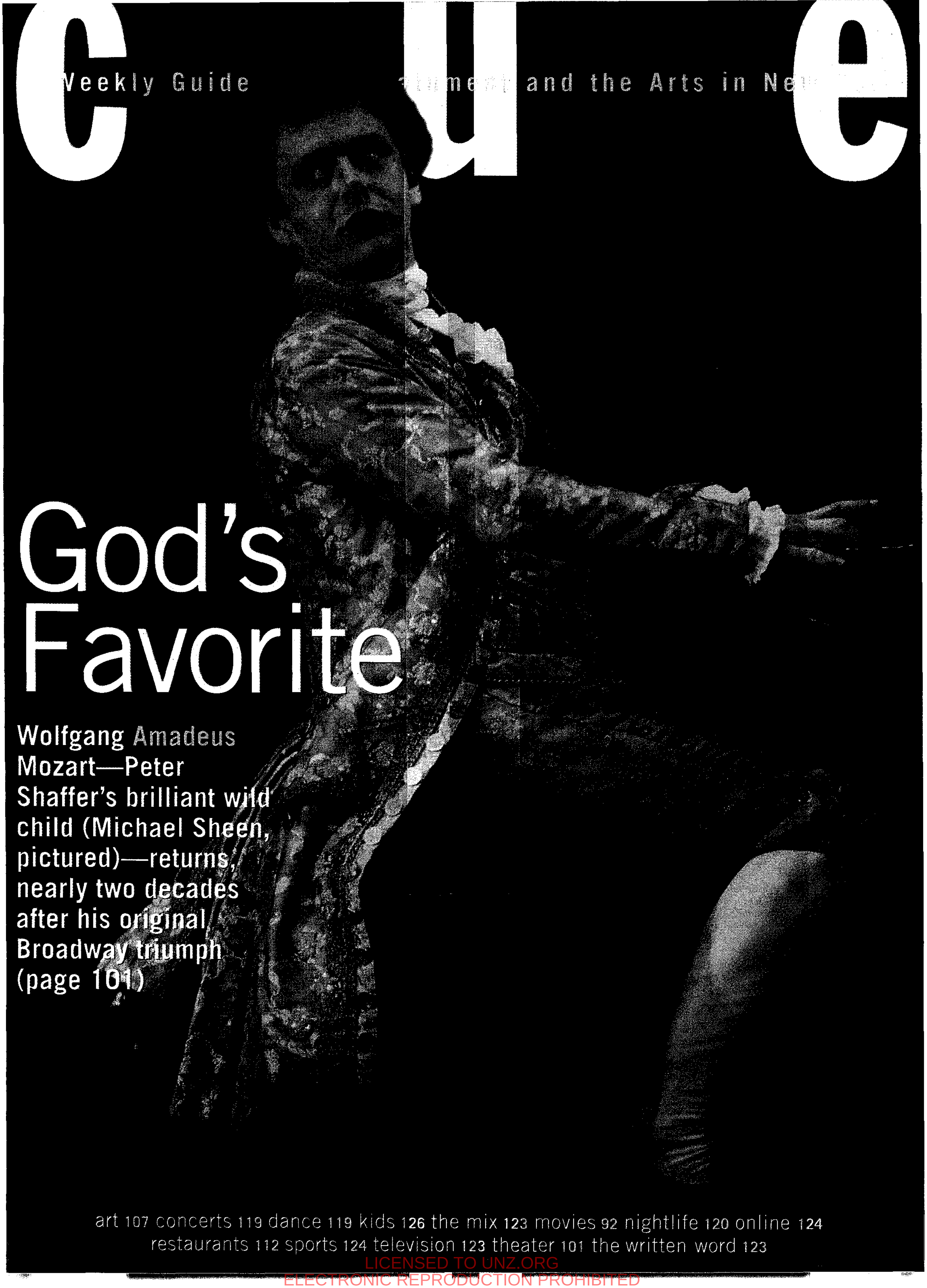
Weekly Guide ainment and the Arts in Ne



God's Favorite

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart—Peter Shaffer's brilliant wild child (Michael Sheen, pictured)—returns, nearly two decades after his original Broadway triumph (page 101)

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restaurants 112 sports 124 television 123 theater 101 the written word 123

movies

Laughton at BAM...Cradle Will Rock...Cider House Rules

Previews

Prepare to Meet Thy Filmmaker

In the somber spirit of *The Shawshank Redemption,* best-selling author Stephen King and screenwriter-director Frank Darabont have collaborated again for another period prison drama, *The Green Mile. Shawshank* came out of nowhere to become a sleeper hit, but *Green Mile* is getting the full-bore Oscar-worthy treatment with Tom Hanks (pictured above left, with Jeffrey DeMunn and David Morse) as a death-row prison guard who befriends a mysterious prisoner awaiting execution for the murder of two little girls. Opens December 10.

New Films

The Adventures of Elmo in Grouchland—Elmo ventures after his lost blankie and in turn gains courage and learns about sharing. With Mandy Patinkin. (1 hr. 20 mins.; G) *Centre Sunnyside; Kew Gardens Cinemas; Main Street Cinemas.*

Agnes Browne—Anjelica Huston directs and stars in this adaptation of Brendan O'Carroll's best-selling novel *The Mammy,* about a widow who struggles to make ends meet and keep her seven children from starving in late-sixties Dublin. (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) *CO Coronet.*

★All About My Mother—Pedro Almodóvar's movie about a mother, magnificently played by Cecilia Roth, who becomes a caregiver to an entire carnival of lost souls, is his best in years. It's a heavily sentimentalized vision of femalehood—a cross between Tennessee Williams (whose presence permeates the play) and Ross Hunter. In Spanish with English subtitles. (Rainer; 11/29/99) (1 hr. 41 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

American Beauty—Kevin Spacey plays a middle-aged zero living out a life of quiet desperation in spic-and-span suburbia with a harridan real-estate-agent wife (Annette Bening) and morose daughter (Thora Birch) who despise him. (Rainer; 9/20/99) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews State; Clearview's Beekman; Loews Orpheum 7; Sony Lincoln Square; bam Rose Cinemas; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas; UA Crossbay.*

American Movie—Two years in the life of Mark Borschadt, a driven and slightly deranged independent filmmaker in Wisconsin. (1 hr. 47 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Anywhere but Here—Mona Simpson's celebrated 1986 novel has been turned into a pallid weepie about a mother, played by Susan Sarandon, who makes life both miserable and rich for her daughter, played by Natalie Portman. Sarandon goes way over the top here; as if to distance herself from the frolics, Portman overdoes the glumness. (Rainer; 11/22/99) (1 hr. 53 mins.; PG-13) *Clearview's Chelsea; Clearview's 59th Street East; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Clearview's 62nd and Broadway; Main Street Cinemas; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

The Bachelor—Chris O'Donnell is in the doghouse with girlfriend Renee Zellweger, but if he can't commit and get married within 24 hours, he'll lose his $100 million inheritance. Rich people really know how to put on the pressure. (1 hr. 40 mins.; PG-13) *UA Criterion; Cinemart.*

★Being John Malkovich—This debut feature from director Spike Jonze and screenwriter Charlie Kaufman is a stunning piece of metaphysical vaudeville. John Cusack plays a dejected puppeteer who, working as a file clerk, discovers in the wall of his office a portal leading directly into the head of John Malkovich (playing himself). (Rainer; 11/8/99) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews State; Loews 72nd St. East; Sony Lincoln Square; bam Rose Cinemas; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

The Best Man—A funny movie about a young writer (Taye Diggs) who comes to New York for a college reunion built around the wedding of two close friends (Morris Chestnut and Monica Calhoun). But when his friends start passing around an advance copy of his new novel—a flimsily disguised autobiography—and start recognizing the characters, he finds himself in a bit of a fix. (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) *Clearview's Chelsea; UA Criterion; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex.*

Beyond the Clouds—After suffering a debilitating stroke, Michelangelo Antonioni asked that Wim Wenders assist him on the completion of this, his latest film. Composed of four highly erotic vignettes taken from Antonioni's novel *The Bowling Alley on the Tiber,* it stars John Malkovich, Peter Weller, Sophie Marceau, Irene Jacob, Jeanne Moreau, and the late Marcello Mastroianni as couples dealing with desire, illusion, and other such enigmatic principles of the human experience. (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) *The Screening Room.*

The Bone Collector—Denzel Washington plays an NYPD criminologist, paralyzed except for the use of one finger, who teams with a patrol cop, played by Angelina Jolie, to nab a serial killer. She spends most of the movie scowling; he spends most of it yowling. They're a pair you can pass on. (Rainer; 11/15/99) (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) *Loews Village; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th St. East; CO Coronet; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★Boys Don't Cry—Directed by first-timer Kimberly Peirce, the film is about Teena Brandon, who, as Brandon Teena, passed as a boy, romanced the girls, and was killed for her deceptions by two ex-cons in Nebraska in 1993. The talented Hilary Swank plays Brandon, and her fine-cut androgyny seems supremely out of place in the trailer-trash milieu. Worth seeing, but Peirce reduces the real-life drama's complexity by framing it as a transgender *Rebel Without a Cause.* (Rainer; 10/18/99) (1 hr. 54 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

★Buena Vista Social Club—Wim Wenders's documentary grew out of the recording sessions in 1996 by Ry Cooder involving some of Cuba's greatest singers and musicians, many of them well over 60, whom he rescued from oblivion. I've never seen another movie that so clearly expressed the sensual sustenance of great folk culture for its practitioners. (Rainer; 6/7/99) (1 hr. 46 mins.; NR) *The Screening Room.*

Cartoon Noir—A feature-length compilation of rather dark, award-winning animated shorts. (1 hr. 23 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village.*

La Ciudad—(*The City*) Four black-and-white vignettes that explore the new-immigrant experience in nineties New York. In Spanish with English subtitles. (1 hr. 28 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Deuce Bigalow, Male Gigolo—*SNL*'s Rob ("makin' copies") Schneider gets mistaken for the male prostitute he's house-sitting for. (1 hr. 25 mins.; R) *Opens 12/10.*

Diamonds—Kirk Douglas is an ex-prizefighter who

"Cue" cover photograph by Joan Marcus.

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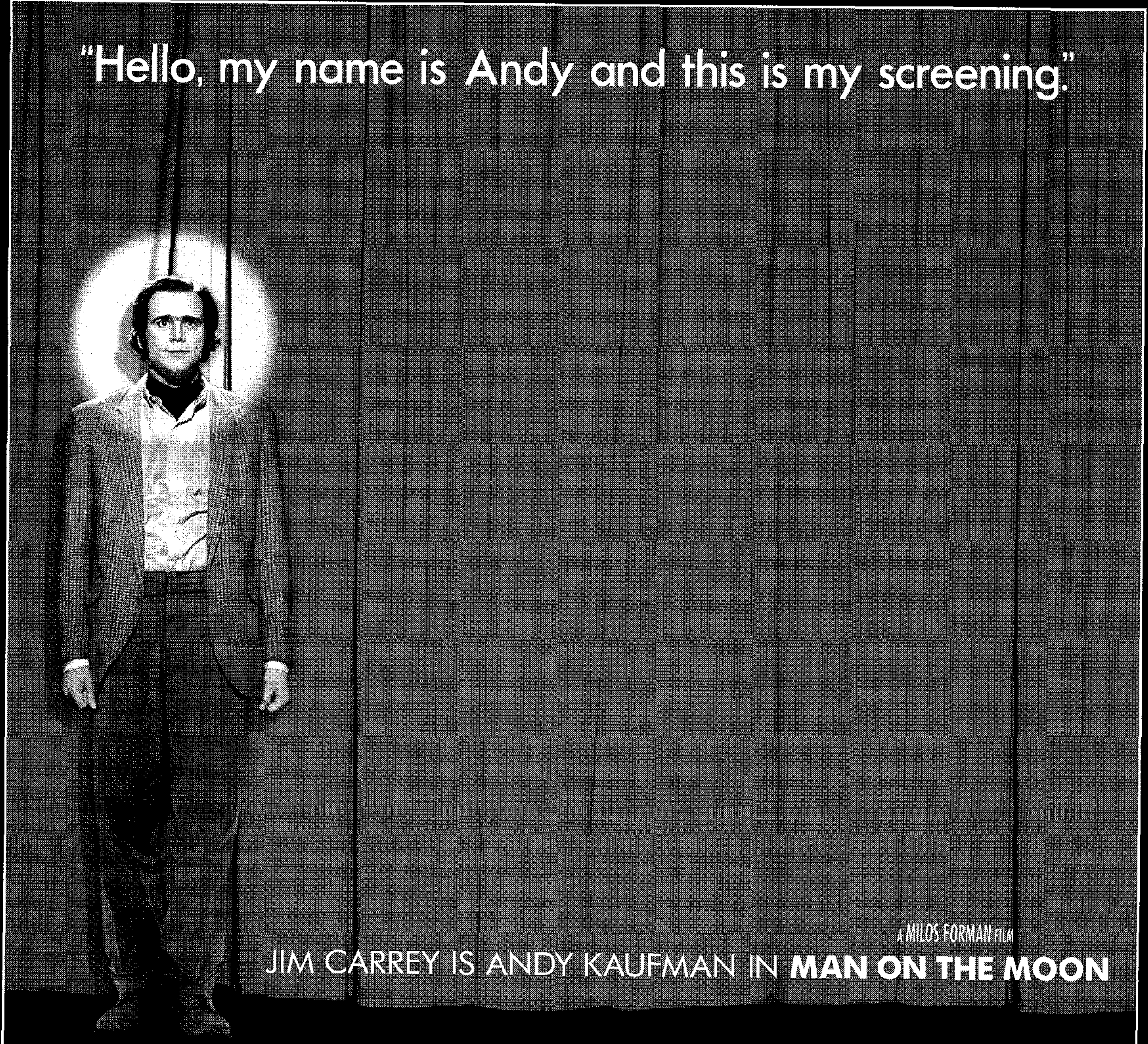
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OPENS NATIONWIDE ON DECEMBER 22ND

Retrospective
The King of All Media

The contrast couldn't be any more striking. As Quasimodo in 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame,' Charles Laughton was a broken child-man, furtive and unloved under pounds of makeup; in 'The Private Life of Henry VIII' (above, with then-wife Elsa Lanchester), he was an explosively outgoing brute, all appetite and arrogance. They are two of the greatest film performances ever, and you can see both at BAM*'s Laughton Centennial, a seven-film series beginning December 11. Also on the bill are Otto Preminger's 'Advise and Consent,' Billy Wilder's 'Witness for the Prosecution,' and Laughton's own directorial debut, 'The Night of the Hunter.' (See "Museums, Societies, Etc.")*

convinces his son (Dan Akroyd) and teenage grandson (Corbin Allred) to join him in a search across Nevada for lost diamonds. With Lauren Bacall (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG-13) *Opens 12/10 for a one-week run.*

The Dinner Game—From the creator of *La Cage aux Folles* comes a comedy about a dinner-party contest in which the winner must invite the most boring person imaginable. In French with English subtitles. (1 hr. 22 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village.*

Dogma—Kevin Smith's comic-book-style take on piety and Catholicism features Ben Affleck and Matt Damon as fallen angels who try to wangle their way back into Heaven. (Rainer; 11/22/99) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; UA East; Sony Lincoln Square; bam Rose Cinemas; Clearview's Cobble Hill; UA Marboro; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

End of Days—Arnold Schwarzenegger finds himself in hellish circumstances as a washed-up ex-cop who must keep a young woman (Robin Tunney) safe from the libidinous clutches of Lucifer (Gabriel Byrne). (1 hr. 58 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea West; Clearview's Ziegfeld; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★The End of the Affair—See Rainer, page 69. *Loews Village; UA Gemini; Sony Lincoln Square.*

Felicia's Journey—Atom Egoyan's adaptation of the William Trevor novel is a piece of nondescript lyricism about a serial killer, played teddy-bear-style by Bob Hoskins, and the young Irish girl who he preys upon. Basically, it's a genre film without the pulp. (Rainer; 11/22/99) (1 hr. 56 mins.; PG-13) *CC Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Fight Club—Edward Norton plays a poor sap who hooks up with a malevolent jester, played by Brad Pitt, in this heavy-duty rant about the soullessness of men's lives in an era when consumerism and corporate culture have snatched their *cojones.* (Rainer; 10/25/99) (2 hrs. 19 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; UA Criterion.*

Flawless—Robert DeNiro is a homophobic ex-cop who suffers a stroke and, as part of his speech therapy, begins taking singing lessons from his cross-dressing neighbor (Philip Seymour Hoffman). (2 hrs. 6 mins.; R) *Loews Village; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th St. East; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Astoria; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★42 Up—This latest installment in the *7 Up* series features most of the original participants in the drear comfort zone of middle age. Director Michael Apted works in material from the preceding five shows, and the effect is both highly emotional and wearying. (Rainer; 11/22/99) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village.*

Hell's Kitchen—After a young man is killed in a drug deal gone awry, his mother (Roseanna Arquette), his friend (Mekhi Phifer), and his sister (Angelina Jolie) try to put the fragile pieces of their lives back together. With William Forsythe. (1 hr. 41 mins.; NR) *CC Village East; UA Criterion.*

Holy Smoke—See Rainer, page 69. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Sony Lincoln Square.*

★The Insider—Al Pacino plays Lowell Bergman, a *60 Minutes* producer, and Russell Crowe is Jeffrey Wigand, the reluctant tobacco company whistleblower whom Bergman coaxed into spilling the beans on his show in an interview. It's a florid, doomy movie, but the muck here is worth raking, and Crowe's performance, as well as Christopher Plummer's as Mike Wallace, are fine; Pacino's is showboaty. (Rainer; 11/15/99) (2 hrs. 37 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Loews State; Sony Lincoln Square; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Last Night—With six hours left here on earth before mass destruction, Sandra Oh, Sarah Polley, David Cronenberg, and Don McKellar (who also directed) find love and examine their fate. (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *Cinema Village.*

Liberty Heights—Set in 1954, Barry Levinson's fourth entry in his Baltimore series has a self-congratulatory earnestness. But the film has some sweet moments, too, such as the scenes between Ben Foster and Rebekah Johnson, as a Jewish high-schooler and his black girlfriend, respectively, and a terrific performance from Joe Mantegna as the family patriarch who cuts out on Rosh Hashanah services to check out the new Cadillacs in a local showroom. (Rainer; 11/29/99) (2 hrs. 5 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Sony Lincoln Square.*

Light It Up—Six very different students band together and take charge of their neglected Queens High School. With Forest Whitaker and Vanessa Williams. (1 hr. 38 mins.; R) *UA Criterion; Bay Plaza; UA Astoria.*

★The Limey—Terence Stamp has a remarkable look here—whittled, with a shock of bright white hair and laser eyes. As a career criminal from England in L.A. to avenge his daughter's murder, he's as implacably invincible as Lee Marvin was in *Point Blank.* The film itself isn't to that level. (Rainer; 10/18/99) (1 hr. 29 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Cinema Village; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3.*

Lola und Bilidikid—A movie about a teenage boy who flees his repressive family life and journeys through Berlin's strange underworld. In German and Turkish with English subtitles. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Mansfield Park—Patricia Rozema's sexy adaptation of Jane Austen's novel, starring Frances O'Connor as a young girl sent to live with relatives who falls in love with her dashing cousin, played by Jonny Lee Miller. (1 hr. 50 mins.; PG-13) *CC Angelika Film Center; Paris Theatre.*

A Map of the World—Sigourney Weaver plays a rural housewife whose life is turned upside down when a neighbor's daughter suffers a tragic accident while under her supervision. With Julianne Moore, David Strathairn, and Chloë Sevigny. (2 hrs. 7 mins.; R) *CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3.*

The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc—Most of this film is a hoot, and at times you wish Joan would just taste the flames and be done with it. John Malkovich gives an amusing turn as Charles VII, and Dustin Hoffman appears as Joan's conscience; with his dry, oracular patter, he could be Obi-Wan George Burns. (Rainer; 11/22/99) (2 hrs. 28 mins.; R) *Loews 19th St. East; UA Criterion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Astoria.*

Music of the Heart—Meryl Streep plays the real-life Roberta Guaspari, who moved to East Harlem and taught schoolkids the violin before seeing her funding cut; she stages a charity benefit at Carnegie Hall with her kids performing en masse with the likes of Isaac Stern, and all is righted. Streep carries on like a rowdy den mother. (Rainer; 11/8/99) (2 hrs. 4 mins.; PG) *CC Crown Gotham; Cinemart.*

The Omega Code—Hidden within the Torah are ancient codes that hold the secrets to unlocking the past and controlling the future. With Michael York and Casper Van Dien. (1 hr. 39 mins.; PG-13) *Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

Pokémon: The First Movie—Master Ash, who, accompanied by the electrically charged Pikachu, continues his quest to be the world's greatest Pokémon trainer. Pokémon are "collectible" creatures with special powers (151 in all). Consider yourself forewarned. (1 hr. 50 mins.; G) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Clearview's 59th Street East; Loews State; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the theaters where the film is playing.

Photograph from Photofest.

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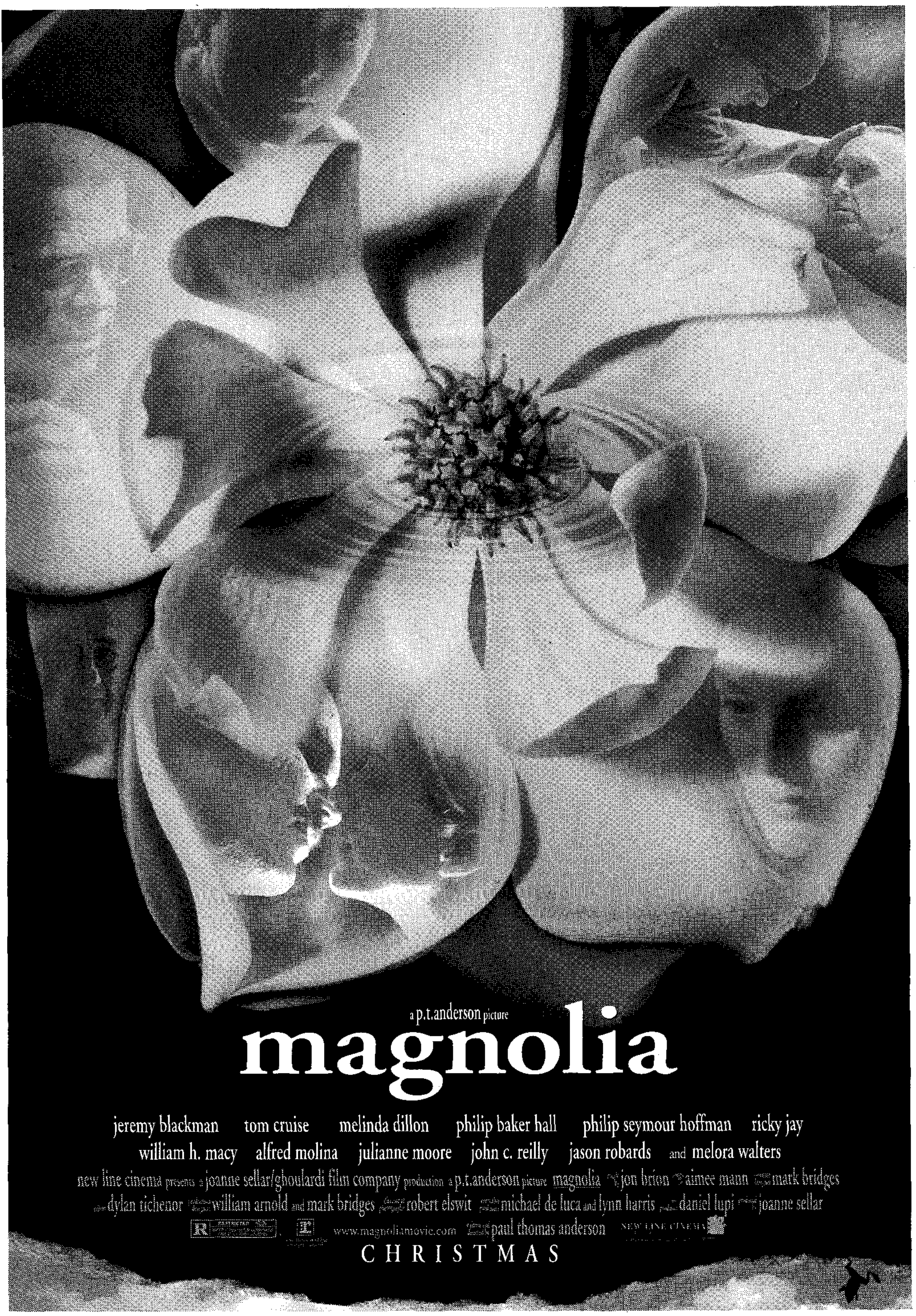
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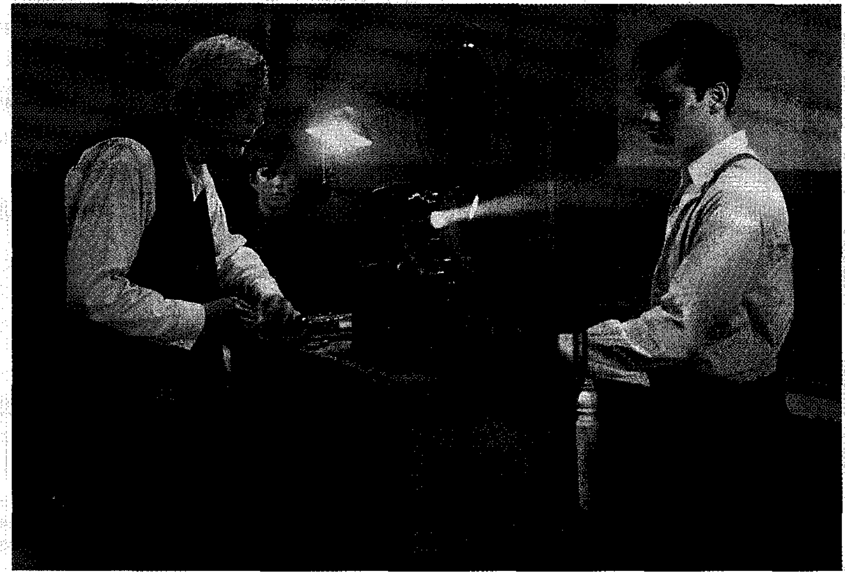
Running Time Found in Translation

"Writing screenplays isn't writing," says novelist John Irving. "It's a kind of architecture." But for Irving, who started adapting his 560-page novel *The Cider House Rules* for the big screen in 1985, *it was the kind of architecture that required more remodeling than* new construction. "What I tried to ask myself was this: Do the characters have the same emotional effect on the audience that they have on readers? If not, get rid of them. Better to lose characters (and their story lines) altogether than to marginalize characters in the film who were important in the novel." *In the end, Irving cut several major sequences and characters, including* Melony, one of the novel's most important figures. After innumerable revisions with a string of directors—the late Phillip Borsos, Wayne Wang, and Michael Winterbottom all took swings at it—producer Richard Gladstein brought in Swedish director Lasse Hallström (*My Life as a Dog, What's Eating Gilbert Grape?*), and finally the three men, as Irving puts it, "agreed to agree." Set during the first half of this century, the screenplay focuses on Dr. Wilbur Larch, an ether-addicted OB-GYN and abortionist (played by Michael Caine, pictured below with Tobey Maguire) who runs an orphanage in St. Clouds, Maine, and his protégé, Homer Wells. The final film—which also stars Charlize Theron as Candy, Homer's love interest, and Delroy Lindo as the incestuous migrant picker Mr. Rose—is indeed a very different animal from the novel, though it manages to retain the novel's pro-abortion politics. "It's been a worthwhile experiment," Irving admits now. "*Cider House* is a good novel and a good film. But it took thirteen years. That's two novels I didn't write because of that screenplay." Though the 57-year-old author continues to work on a screenplay based on his eighth novel, *A Son of the Circus,* he hasn't given up his day job. "The process of moviemaking is so slow—slower, even, than writing and rewriting—that there is nothing in the least *thrilling* about it. Not to me. . . . Writing screenplays has only made me appreciate writing novels *more.*" *The Cider House Rules* opens December 10. BRETT KELLY



★**Princess Mononoke**—The great Japanese animation director Hayao Miyazaki has crafted a ravishing epic set in mythic fourteenth-century Japan, filled with gods and demons and forest creatures. The mixture of cel and computer animation is fluidly achieved, and the Americanized dialogue, voiced by the likes of Minnie Driver and Billy Bob Thornton, is only mildly jarring. (Rainer; 11/8/99) (2 hrs. 13 mins.; PG-13) *CC Angelika Film Center.*

Ride With the Devil—Ang Lee's Civil War–era epic tells the story of the Bushwhackers and Jayhawkers who fought each other on the frontier. With the adorable Tobey McGuire, Skeet Ulrich, and Jeffrey Wright as young men thrown into battle against their better judgment and singer Jewel as the lovely object of their affections. (2 hrs. 18 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Sony Lincoln Square.*

★**Rosetta**—Luc and Jean-Pierre Dardenne's engrossing, if somewhat forbidding, drama about a 17 year-old girl, played powerfully by Emilie Dequenne, who wants only to leave behind her trailer-trash life and get a job. In French with English subtitles. (Rainer; 11/15/99) (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema.*

★**Run Lola Run**—German director Tom Tykwer has made a movie that really zips along. It recaps the same basic plot in three alternate ways. Lola's boyfriend, Manni (Moritz Bleibtreu), a low-level courier for a crime boss, accidentally loses his cash delivery, and has twenty minutes to replace it or he's kaput. (Rainer; 6/28/99) (1 hr. 21 mins.; R) *The Screening Room.*

The Sixth Sense—Bruce Willis, Toni Collette, a little boy with a dark ability, and a nice twist. (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) *CC Village East; UA Criterion; UA Gemini; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

Sleepy Hollow—Tim Burton's latest creepfest is a triumph of production design, of gnarled vistas and foggy woods and slime, but the horror stays at a fairly adolescent level. Burton is in a perpetual state of Halloween. (Rainer; 11/29/99) (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews New York Twin; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Spanish Fly—A disenchanted journalist goes to Madrid to write a cynical book about "the myth of machismo," only to find her own libido reactivated by the many virile and romantic men she encounters. Mmm, mmm, mmm. (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin.*

Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace—George Lucas has been quoted as saying that actors are still the best way to portray people, but, watching his new movie, the first in a trio of prequels, you get the feeling he wishes he could dispense with actors altogether. Ninety-five percent of this film was created in the computer; only about 200 shots were not altered digitally. (Rainer; 5/24/99) (2 hrs.; PG-13) *CC Village East; UA Criterion; UA Gemini; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**The Straight Story**—David Lynch's affecting, meditative movie about a stubborn codger (Richard Farnsworth) who rides his lawn mower clear across Iowa to visit an ailing, estranged brother is perhaps the greatest Hallmark Hall of Fame movie Hallmark never made. It's sweet, and Farnsworth, and Sissy Spacek, playing his daughter, are very fine. (Rainer; 10/25/99) (1 hr. 51 mins.; G) *CC Village East; CC Eastside Playhouse; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

Sweet and Lowdown—See Rainer, page 69. (1 hr. 35 mins.; PG-13) *UA Union Square; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

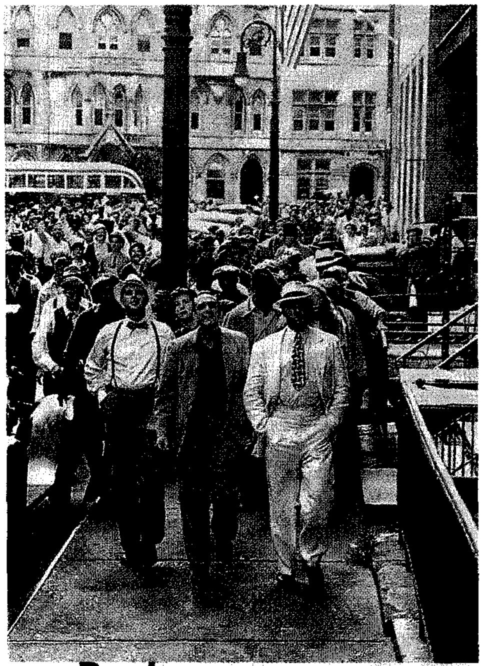
The World Is Not Enough—In this Bond movie, Pierce Brosnan, looking neither shaken nor stirred, goes through the motions with a baddie with a bullet in his brain, played by Robert Carlyle, and some Bond babes, Sophie Marceau and Denise Richards, whose performance as a nuclear specialist is a Golden Turkey shoo-in. (Rainer; 11/29/99) (2 hrs. 8 mins.; PG-13) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Astor Plaza; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Olympia; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Three Kings**—Four soldiers—played by George Clooney, Mark Wahlberg, Spike Jonze, and Ice Cube—go AWOL in search of stolen Kuwaiti gold bullion after the Gulf War . (Rainer; 10/4/99) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *Loews State.*

★**Toy Story 2**—See Rainer, page 69. (1 hr. 38 mins.; G) *CC Village East; Clearview's Chelsea; CC Sutton; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Tumbleweeds—The winner of this year's Filmmaker's Trophy at Sundance stars Tony-winner Janet McTeer as a rural southern woman who packs up her 12-year-old daughter and drives cross-country in search of a better life, or at the very least, a better boyfriend. With Jay O. Sanders and Gavin O'Connor. (1 hr. 44 mins.; PG-13) *UA Union Square.*

Photograph by Stephan Vaughan.



Previews

Robbins's the *Cradle*

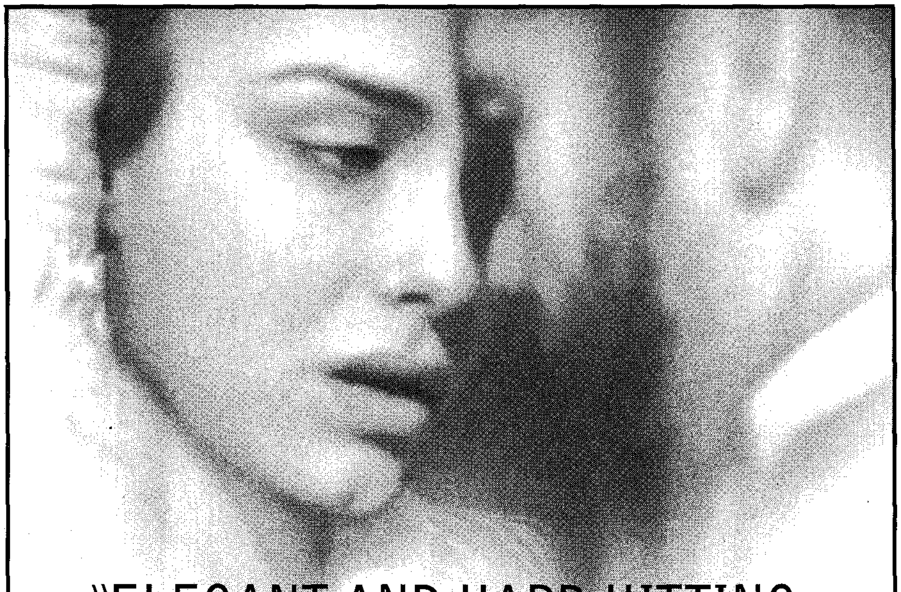
There's a lot going on in Tim Robbins's flamboyant theatrical swirl 'Cradle Will Rock.' Centered on the 1937 Orson Welles production of Marc Blitzstein's musical–cum–anticapitalist tract, the story expands to take in everything from Depression-era pathos to the purpose of art. With an astounding ensemble cast that includes Susan Sarandon as a fund-raiser for Il Duce, Bill Murray as a disgruntled ventriloquist, Cherry Jones as Federal Theater Project chief Hallie Flanagan, Emily Watson as a waifish ingenue, John Turturro as an immigrant actor who sees the light, John Cusack as Nelson Rockefeller, Angus Macfadyen as Welles, and Ruben Blades as muralist Diego Rivera. Opens December 8.

2 x 4—A young Irish immigrant settles in the North Bronx and gets caught up in the drug underworld while working construction. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Virtual Sexuality—It's been a while, but apparently, science-fair fare has not bid us farewell. This time a teenage girl creates the perfect man. (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) *CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Cinemart; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

Wallowitch & Ross: This Moment—A documentary about the twenty-year romance between septuagenarians Bertram Ross and John Wallowitch. (1

Photograph by Demmie Todd.



"ELEGANT AND HARD HITTING, this superbly staged battle between the sexes is never less than intriguing."
Brandon Judell, DETOUR MAGAZINE

"FASCINATING... Saffron Burrows is strikingly bold."
Cody Tucker, INTERVIEW MAGAZINE

saffron burrows peter mullan

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hr. 17 mins.; NR) *Opens 12/10 at Cinema Village.*

Wisconsin Death Trip—Constructed from authentic news reports and archival photographs and based on the Michael Lesy's best-selling pictorial history, James Marsh's first feature film reenacts the bizarre true events that haunted the eccentric inhabitants of Black River Falls, Wisconsin, in the late nineteenth century. Complete with a cocaine-snorting school mistress, scores of unexplained suicides, and a pretty teenager who doubles as the town arsonist. (1 hr. 16 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Art Greenwich Twin—97–101 Greenwich Ave. at W. 12th St. (212-929-3350) *Dogma; Spanish Fly.*

CC Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) *All About My Mother; Felicia's Journey; The Limey; Mansfield Park; Princess Mononoke.*

CC Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (212-529-6799) *Hell's Kitchen; The Sixth Sense; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; The Straight Story; Toy Story 2; Virtual Sexuality.*

Cinema Village—22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) *Cartoon Noir; The Dinner Game; 42 Up; Last Night; The Limey.*

Clearview's Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (777-FILM#603) *End of Days; The World Is Not Enough.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110) *American Movie; Wisconsin Death Trip.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Loews Village—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (50-LOEWS#952) *American Beauty; Being John Malkovich; The Bone Collector; The End of the Affair; Flawless; Liberty Heights; Sleepy Hollow.*

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) *La Ciudad; Lola und Bilidikid; Rosetta; 2 x 4.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.".

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (below Canal) (212-334-2100) *Beyond the Clouds; Buena Vista Social Club; Run Lola Run.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

UA Union Square—13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) *Boys Don't Cry; Dogma; End of Days; Fight Club; The Insider; Pokemon: The First Movie; Ride With the Devil; Sweet and Lowdown; Tumbleweeds; The World Is Not Enough.*

14th–41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) *The Bone Collector; Flawless; Virtual Sexuality.*

Clearview's Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#597) *Anywhere but Here; Being John Malkovich; The Best Man; Dogma; The Insider; Pokemon: The First Movie; Toy Story 2; Virtual Sexuality; The World Is Not Enough.*

Clearview's Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#614) *End of Days.*

Loews 19th St. East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (50-LOEWS#858) *American Beauty; The Bone Collector; Flawless; The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc; Sleepy Hollow.*

Loews Kips Bay Theatre—570 Second Ave. (505-6397#558) *American Beauty; Being John Malkovich; Dogma; End of Days; The Insider; The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

42nd–60th Streets

CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) *The Insider; The Limey; A Map of the World.*

CC Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (212-759-2262) *Music of the Heart.*

CC Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (212-755-3020) *The Straight Story.*

CC Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (212-759-1411) *Toy Story 2.*

Clearview's 59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (777-FILM#615) *Anywhere but Here; Pokemon: The First Movie.*

Festivals

Great Seats Still Available

When it rains, it pours. And there is no escaping the torrent of films on view this week from Russia and the former Soviet Republics. The "New York Festival of Russian Films" will begin December 10 at the DGA theater with Valerij Ogorodnikov's 'Barak' a staggering depiction of life in a Soviet barracks. Meanwhile, MOMA's *"FilmFest" continues with eight more films from and about the former Soviet states, featuring Jacki Ochs's 'Letters Not About Love' (pictured above), a dual portrait of life in America and Russia. (See "Museums, Societies, Etc." for details.)*

Clearview's Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (777-FILM#602) *End of Days.*

CO Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Agnes Browne; The Bone Collector.*

CO Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Bringing Out the Dead; Double Jeopardy; The House on Haunted Hill; An Ideal Husband; Random Hearts; Stir of Echoes; Three to Tango.*

Loews 42nd Street E Walk—42nd Street at Eighth Ave. (50-LOEWS#572) *The Bone Collector; Dogma; End of Days; Flawless; Sleepy Hollow; Sweet and Lowdown; Toy Story 2; Virtual Sexuality.*

Loews Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (50-LOEWS#699) *The World Is Not Enough.*

Loews State—1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (50-LOEWS#901) *American Beauty; Being John Malkovich; The Insider; Pokemon: The First Movie; Three Kings.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) *Mansfield Park.*

UA Criterion—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (212-354-0900) *The Bachelor; The Best Man; Fight Club; Hell's Kitchen; Light It Up; The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc; The Sixth Sense; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

CC 86th St. East—210 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#763) *Flawless; The Insider; Toy Story 2.*

Clearview's Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (777-FILM#606) *American Beauty.*

Clearview's First & 62nd St.—400 E. 62nd St. (777-FILM#957) *Dogma; End of Days; Flawless; Virtual Sexuality; The World Is Not Enough.*

Clearview's Park and 86th St.—125 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#604) *Anywhere but Here; The Bone Collector.*

Loews 72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (50-LOEWS#704) *Being John Malkovich.*

Loews New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (50-LOEWS#698) *Sleepy Hollow.*

Loews Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (50-LOEWS#964) *American Beauty; End of Days; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Virtual Sexuality; The World Is Not Enough.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) *Dogma.*

UA Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) *The End of the Affair; The Sixth Sense; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (777-FILM#864) *Anywhere but Here.*

Clearview's Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (777-FILM#609) *The Bone Collector; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow.*

Clearview's Olympia—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (777-FILM#613) *End of Days; The World Is Not Enough.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (212-757-2280) *All About My Mother; Boys Don't Cry; Felicia's Journey; Sweet and Lowdown.*

Loews 84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (50-LOEWS#701) *End of Days; The World Is Not Enough; Toy Story 2.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) *End of Days; Sleepy Hollow; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (212-862-5728) *End of Days; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow.*

Sony Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (50-LOEWS#638) *American Beauty; Being John Malkovich; The Bone Collector; Dogma; The End of the Affair; Flawless; Holy Smoke; The Insider; Liber-*

Photograph courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art.

ty Heights; *Pokemon: The First Movie; Ride With the Devil; Sleepy Hollow.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Bronx

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (777-FILM#833) *The Best Man; The Bone Collector; End of Days; Flawless; Light It Up; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) *The Best Man; The Bone Collector; End of Days; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy .(718-409-9030) *The Best Man; The Bone Collector; End of Days; Flawless; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Brooklyn

BAM Rose Cinemas—30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770) *American Beauty; Being John Malkovich; Dogma.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (718-596-7070) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-251-0700) *End of Days; Sleepy Hollow; Toy Story 2.*

Clearview's Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (718-596-9113) *Being John Malkovich; Dogma; Pokemon: The First Movie; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

CO Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy., at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) *End of Days; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Linden Boulevard Multiplex—Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-277-0303) *The Best Man; The Bone Collector; End of Days; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Pavilion—188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) *End of Days; Flawless; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) *End of Days; Sleepy Hollow; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

UA Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) *Dogma; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) *The Bone Collector; End of Days; Flawless; The Insider; The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Queens

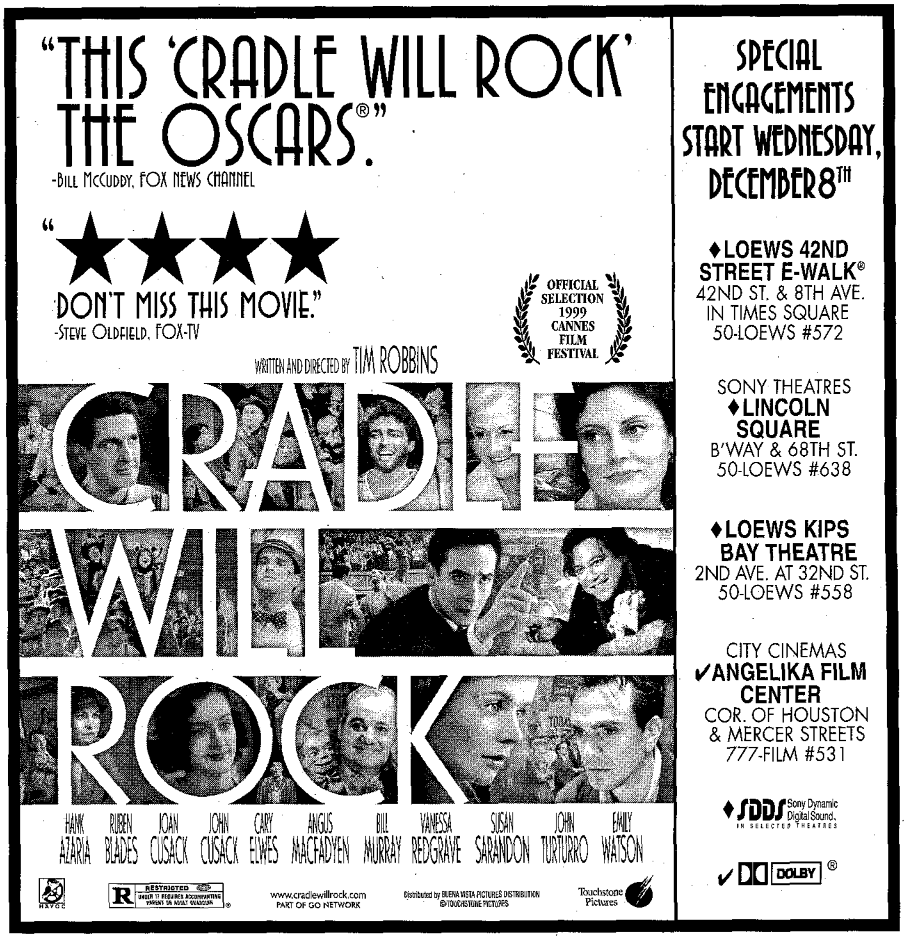
Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd.(718-361-6869) *The Adventures of Elmo in Grouchland; End of Days; The Insider; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow;; Toy Story 2 The World Is Not Enough.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) *The Bachelor; Music of the Heart; Sleepy Hollow; Toy Story 2; Virtual Sexuality.*

CO Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Call theater for showtimes.*

College Point Multiplex—28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) *The Bone Collector; Dogma; End of Days; The Insider; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy



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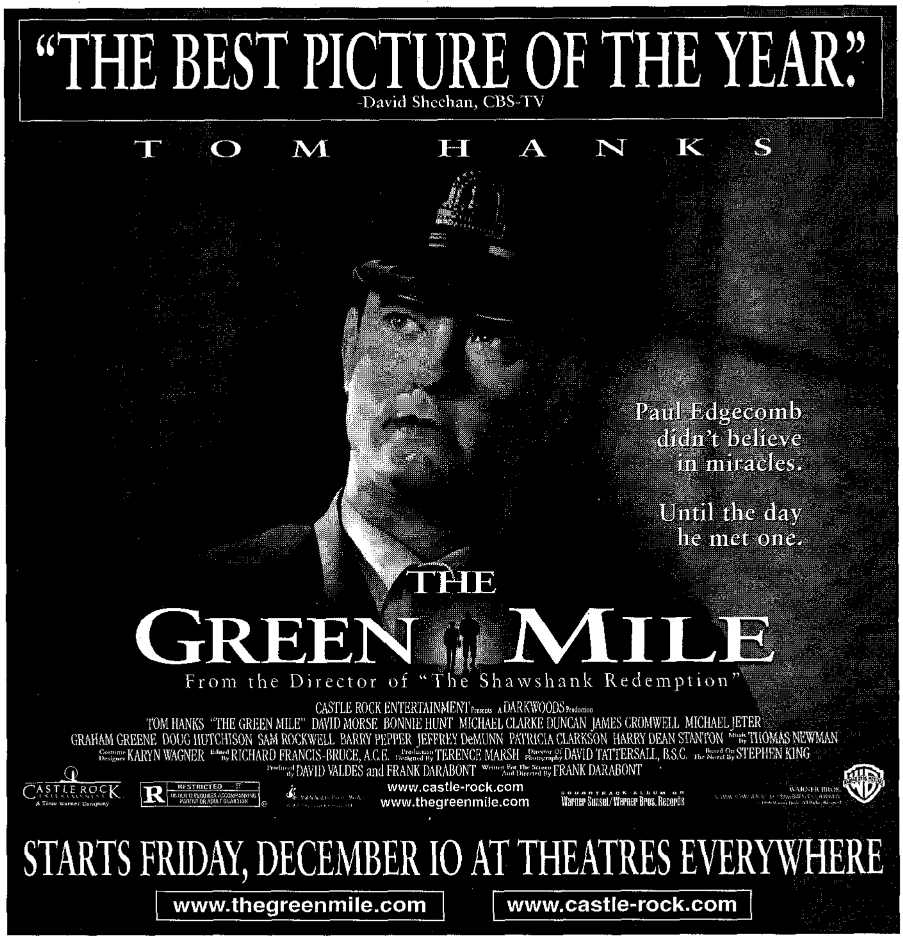

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Davis *continued from page 77*

basic backdrop consists of three huge white triangular panels arranged to meet in a point that leads the eye into infinity. Max Keller's bold lighting design for this minimalist space is perhaps rather too obviously color-coded (red equals passion, yellow equals day, dark blue equals night, etc.), but director Dorn fills it with many intriguing details. The shifting perspectives of Act One aboard ship are particularly well handled, as private and public dramas nervously intersect. Isolde's use of a toy ship, a sword, and such to illustrate the story of her first meeting with Tristan is paralleled in Act Three as Tristan wanders through a minefield of play castles and other mementos of his tragic past—an affecting commentary on the childish unreality of these two lives before the love potion unleashed uncontrollable adult passions. On the whole, this *Tristan* offers much to ponder (though I'm still wondering about the significance of the male characters' samurai cloaks and hair buns).

The other roles have been strongly cast, particularly King Marke—René Pape, in fact, rightly earned the greatest ovation of the evening, singing this tortured monarch with magisterial power and moving eloquence. Katarina Dalayman is a soprano Brangäne, but her warmly textured voice is appealingly contrasted with Eaglen's brighter instrument, and her devotion to Isolde as well as her own inner turmoil are both made very real. Richard Paul Fink shows the same qualities as Tristan's faithful Kurwenal, which he sings with unusual grace and expressive intensity.

Many musicians in the Met Orchestra are no doubt playing this score for the first time, which perhaps excuses the occasional technical lapses one never expects to hear from James Levine's famous band. There were many gorgeous instrumental moments, but there were also some very long half-hours, and in the end I was not fully convinced, let alone carried away, by Levine's *Tristan*. I could sense no breadth in the great sweeping musical paragraphs, no overall shape or design, no inevitability to the huge climaxes, no catharsis at the end. It was, like so much of Levine's work on the podium these days, curiously abstract, without any real musical point of view or emotional center. This to me is the real fatal flaw in the new Met production of Wagner's sublime work. Without a conductor possessed and inspired by the score, no matter how well trained and instrumentally sensational his orchestra may be, the full *Tristan* experience can simply never happen. ■

Peter G. Davis's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Hollow; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-478-6777) *End of Days; Sleepy Hollow; The World Is Not Enough.*

Kaufman Astoria Cinema—38th St. at 35th Ave.(718-786-2020) *American Beauty; Being John Malkovich; The Bone Collector; Dogma; The Insider; Pokemon: The First Movie; The Sixth Sense; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; The World Is Not Enough; Toy Story 2; Virtual Sexuality.*

Kew Gardens Cinemas—81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) *The Adventures of Elmo in Grouchland; American Beauty; Boys Don't Cry; The Omega Code; The Straight Story.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St.(718-263-4828) *The Adventures of Elmo in Grouchland; Anywhere but Here; The Bone Collector; Dogma; End of Days; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229-7702) *Music of the Heart; The Sixth Sense; Train of Life.*

Plaza—103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) *Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Sony Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave., at Bell Blvd., Bayside (777-FILM#712) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (777-FILM#733) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (777-FILM#735) *Call theater for showtimes.*

UA Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (718-726-1279) *End of Days; Flawless; Light It Up; The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc; Sleepy Hollow.*

UA Brandon Cinema—70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) *The Bone Collector; Dogma.*

UA Crossbay—94–11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) *American Beauty; The Bone Collector; End of Days.*

UA Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) *The Insider; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

UA Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) *Being John Malkovich; The Best Man; End of Days; Flawless; The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc; Pokemon: The First Movie; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; The World Is Not Enough.*

UA Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (718-225-7711) *Anywhere but Here; The Bone Collector; End of Days; Sleepy Hollow.*

UA Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) *Anywhere but Here; The Bone Collector; End of Days; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Staten Island

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) *Toy Story II; Anywhere but Here; Being John Malkovich; The Bone Collector; End of Days; The Insider; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; The World Is Not Enough.*

UA Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) *The Bone Collector; End of Days; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

UA Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) *Anywhere but Here; The Bone Collector; Dogma; End of Days; Flawless; The Insider; Pokemon: The First Movie; Sleepy Hollow; Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace; Toy Story 2; The World Is Not Enough.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

African Diaspora Film Festival—Through 12/8 at Plaza Twin, Brooklyn: 314 Flatbush Ave. (718-636-0110). Tickets are $8–15. Call 212-749-6020 for tickets and schedule, or visit www.africanfilm.com. for information.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"Evening Screenings" every Wednesday through Sunday: *The Straight Story*. Through 1/2: "The Future Is Now." 12/11: *Metropolis* (1927); *Brazil*. 12/12: *Brazil; Blade Runner—The Director's Cut* (1982/91). 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077). Tickets, $4.50–$8.50. Members and children under 4, free.

Anthology Film Archives—12/8: "New Filmmakers" shorts: *1967; The Night Ferris Bueller Died*. Feature: *El Septimo Cielo*. 12/8–12/9: *Genesis*. 12/9–12/10: *The Port of Last Resort/Ziflucht in Shanghai; Memory of Berlin*. 12/11–12/12: "New York Festival of Russian Films." 32 Second Ave. (212-505-5110); $8.

BAM Rose Cinemas—Mondays through 1/10: "Frank Capra: A Vision of the 30s." 12/6: *It Happened One Night* (1934). 12/13: *Broadway Bill* (1934). 12/7: *Fellini's Casanova* (1976). 12/8: *Hangover Square* (1945). 12/9: *Pulp Fiction* (1994). 12/10: *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964). 12/11–1/23/00: "The Laughton Centennial." 12/11: *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1939). 12/12: *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (1933). 30 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn (718-623-2770).

Cinema Classics—12/7: *Shampoo* (1975). 12/8–12/10: *Manhattan* (1979). 12/11–12/12: *The Conformist* (1970). 12/13–12/15: *Night of the Hunter* (1955). 12/11: Midnight Special: *Sign o' the Times*. 332 E. 11th St.; $5. Call 212-675-6692 for information.

Different Light—12/5: *Please Don't Eat the Daisies* (1960). 7 P.M. 151 W. 19th St. (212-989-4850); free.

Film Forum—Through 1/13: "Columbia 75." 12/7: *Angels Over Broadway* (1940); *No Greater Glory* (1934). 12/8: *Murder by Contract* (1958); *City of Fear* (1959). 12/9: *The Crimson Kimono* (1959); *Underworld U.S.A.* (1961). 12/10–12/11: *Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice* (1969); *Shampoo* (1975). 12/12: *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939); *The Last Hurrah* (1958). 12/13: *She Married Her Boss* (1935); *Too Many Husbands* (1940). 209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110); $9.

Film Society of Lincoln Center (The Walter Reade Theater)—Through 12/9: "*The New Yorker* Goes to the Movies." 12/7: *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (1941); *The Male Story* (1942); *L.A. Story* (1991). 12/8: *The Red Badge of Courage* (1951); *In Cold Blood* (1967). 12/9: *Sunday Bloody Sunday* (1971); *Casualties of War* (1989). 12/10–12/24: "Spanish Cinema Now." 12/10: *Beloved/Friend; Alone*. 12/11: *Goya in Bordeaux; Alone*. 12/12: *Beloved/Friend*. 12/13: *Goya in Bordeaux; Alone*. 12/11: "Reel to Real for Kids: Circus Dreaming." 12/12: "Movies for Kids." *The Brothers Lionheart*. 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (212-875-5600); regular screenings $8.50–$15; "Movies for Kids," $3.

Museum of Modern Art—Through 12/19: "Film-Fest." 12/7: *Letters Not About Love; In That Land* (1997). 12/9: *Aksuat; An Ordinary President*. 12/10: *The Flight of the Bee; Outskirts*. 12/11: *In That Land; Aksuat*. 12/13: *Outskirts; Checkpoint*. 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9400); free with $9.50 admission.

Quad Cinema—Through 12/9: "Northern Lights: New Films From Iceland." Beginning 12/10: "The Hubley Studio Series." Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800); $8 for adults, $5 for kids and seniors.

IMAX—*Siegfried & Roy: The Magic Box; Across the Sea of Time; T-Rex: Back to the Crustaceous; Encounters in the Third Dimension; The IMAX Nutcracker.* Sony Lincoln Square, 1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (50-LOEWS#638).

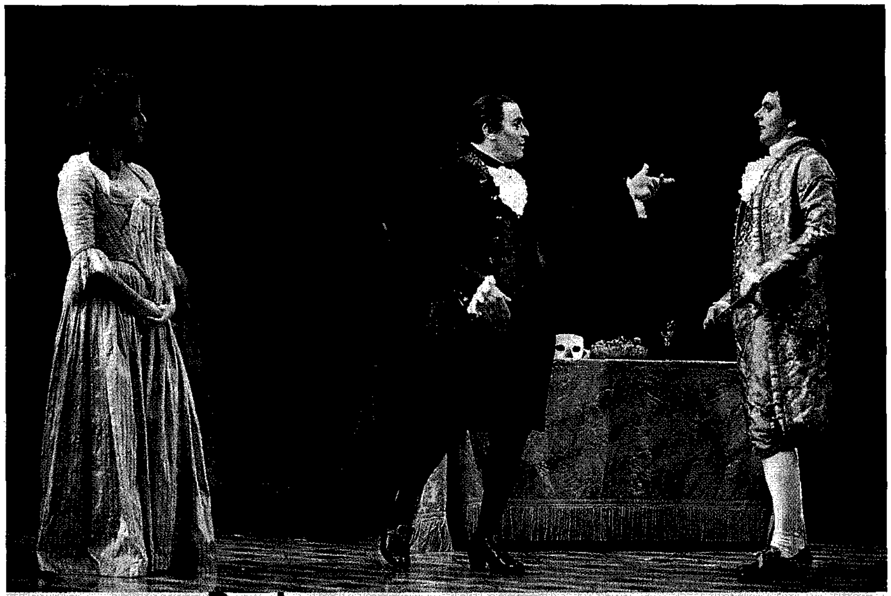
New York Russian Film Festival—12/10–12/12 at the DGA Theater, 110 West 57th St. 12/11–12/10 at Anthology Film Archives (see listing above). Call 212-619-3033 for schedule, tickets and info; $8.

The Screening Room—Fridays and Saturdays at midnight: *Love God*. Sunday Brunch: *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). Sunday afternoons: *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*. 12/7: *Babette's Feast*. Call theater for info. 54 Varick St. (212-334-2100); $9 ($6 for Sunday brunch patrons).

YWCA Cine-Club—12/11–12/12: *Masculine-Feminine* (1966). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (212-735-9717); $6 members, $7 nonmembers.

theater

Adam Baum...Chalfant...If Memory Serves



Previews

Mostly Mozart

Nearly two decades after its London and Broadway triumphs, Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus* returns, again directed by Sir Peter Hall. Michael Sheen purrs, hisses, and farts as Mozart, while David Suchet (center, with Sheen and Cindy Katz), known best as Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot on *Mystery!*, plays his conniving nemesis, Salieri. Previews begin December 7. (See "Broadway.")

Broadway

Previews and Openings

Amadeus—Peter Hall's new production of Peter Schaffer's play. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 12/7 for a 12/15 opening. *Music Box Theatre, 239 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jackie Mason—Much Ado About Everything—Whole lotta Mason, very little Bard. $65–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/30 opening. *Golden Theatre, 252 West 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Swing!—The dance marathon begins, with requisite suspenders and flared skirts, in this new musical. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. In previews for a 12/9 opening. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Waiting in the Wings—Lauren Bacall and Rosemary Harris star in the Broadway premiere of Noël Coward's sassy senior-citizen saga. $25–$70. Call for schedule. In previews for a 12/16 opening. *Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

Now Playing

Annie Get Your Gun—Bernadette Peters plays the sharp-tongued, sharpshootin' gal from Cincinnati who eclipses her lover, Frank Butler (played by Tom Wopat), in Buffalo Bill's traveling Wild West Show. $35–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-307-4100).*

Beauty and the Beast—Disney's beast is back. (No, not the mouse.) Andrea McArdle blanches and blushes as the fair maiden; Steve Blanchard roars and repents as the Beast. $25–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).*

Cabaret—The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for re-creating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Aided by Rob Marshall as co-director and choreographer, Mendes confirms his directorial reputation with the nightclub scenes. Joe Masteroff's refurbished book emphasizes the squalor of 1930 Berlin nightlife and the bisexuality of Clifford, the writer hero. The supporting cast delivers staunchly. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Now starring Susan Egan and Michael Hall. $25–$90. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 3/19/98. *Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).*

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. $40–$75. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2 and 8, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (212-239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. (Simon: 11/30/98.) Now starring Sandy Duncan. $20–$80. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Dame Edna: The Royal Tour—Other performers have invented running stage personas for themselves like Australia's Barry Humphries and his Dame Edna Everage, but have they been this amusing? I am prepared to declare him the funniest man in today's theater. Also the funniest woman. He is a great improviser who plays with his audience as if it were a beach ball. (Simon: 11/2/99.) $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Epic Proportions—The boop-a-doop cutie Kristin Chenoweth gets her own vehicle in this comedy about old-time Hollywood filmmaking. $45–$65. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Footloose—Kevin Bacon is not a part of adaptation, but the lead does have his haircut. $20–$75. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6. Opened: 10/22/98. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (212-307-4100).*

Fosse—A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago*. $65–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

It Ain't Nothin' but the Blues—Powered by seven singers and a swinging band, the revue traces the history of the blues. $35–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Ambassador Theatre, 215 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. $45–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8; Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/28/97. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Kat and the Kings—An all-black doo-wop group struggles for recognition in South Africa. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

Kiss Me, Kate—With a score jammed with some of the best-known theater songs ever written, it's no wonder each generation has rediscovered this gem since its 1948 Broadway premiere. Now Brian Stokes Mitchell and Marin Mazzie will interpret Cole Porter's feuding couple—two actors who play the Shrew's Kate and Petruchio in a play-within-the-musical—for a generation obsessed with the backstage canoodling of celluloid Shakespeareans like Paltrow and DiCaprio. $25–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

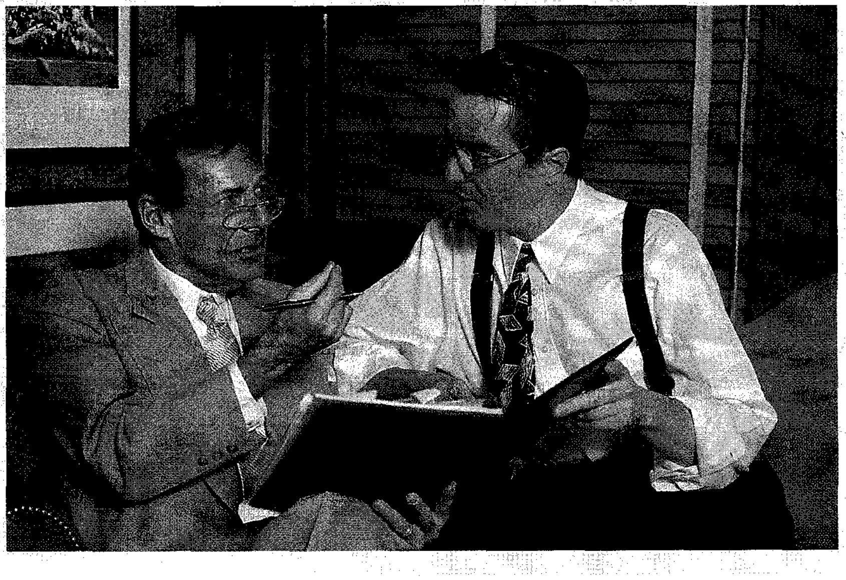
Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest of eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200). 3 hrs. 15 mins.*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical*, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. (Simon: 12/1/97.) $20–$80. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 11/13/97. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).*

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

Previews
Do Not Go Gentile . . .

Playwright Daniel Goldfarb's *Adam Baum and the Jew Movie* began in an NYU film-studies seminar in 1995. Screenwriter Ring Lardner Jr. was reminiscing about his attempt to adapt a novel that confronted anti-Semitism and recalled that when he presented his screenplay to studio boss Samuel Goldwyn, "His opening words were, 'Lardner, you have defrauded and betrayed me. Just one of the reasons I hired you for this script is that you were a gentile, but you wrote this as a Jew.' " This tantalizing hint of a larger story inspired Goldfarb, then a 22-year-old playwriting student, to write a fictional piece about such a producer and writer. "I finished it up at Sundance in 1996," he remembers, "and did a reading around a picnic table. The dramaturge there loved it and said, 'It's done, don't touch it.' I was thrilled." Goldfarb laughs and admits, "Then I learned what the process of writing a play is *really* like." More than fifteen rewrites, scores of Juilliard seminars, three directors, three years, and several theaters later, *Adam Baum and the Jew Movie* (starring Ron Liebman, left, with Christopher Evan Welch) is arriving Off Broadway in a very different version. The sympathetic gentile screenwriter, unlike Lardner, is now an alcoholic and worse; a black maid appeared and disappeared from a subplot; and Samuel Baum, the studio boss and father of Adam Baum, now admires a rival Jewish movie, Elia Kazan's *Gentleman's Agreement*, which actually did deal with anti-Semitism in 1947. Now 26 and a budding NYU playwriting teacher, Goldfarb is more realistic about the dramatic process: "I learned that if your first draft is going well—great, start rewriting. If your first draft isn't, well, just put it away." Opens December 12. (See "Off Broadway.") LOGAN HILL



Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

Marie Christine—*See Simon, p. 73.* In Michael John LaChiusa's new musical, Audra McDonald plays a creole woman who falls for a sea captain. Sherry Boone replaces McDonald for Wed. and Sat. matinees. $40–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Sun. at 3. *Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).*

Minnelli on Minnelli—Liza's tribute to her late father, Vincente. $35–$125. Tues.–Sat. at 8, 12/26 and 1/2/00 at 3. Through 1/2/00. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway at 47th St. (212-307-4100).*

Miss Saigon—An adaptation of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly.* $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (212-239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

The Phantom of the Opera—Eleven leads, eleven years, and roughly 7 million theatergoers later, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

The Price—James Naughton directs Arthur Miller's 1968 family drama, starring Jeffrey DeMunn, Bob Dishey, Lizbeth Mackay, and Harris Yulin. $25–65. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Wed. and Sat. at 2. Sun. at 3. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Putting It Together—The Stephen Sondheim musical revue roars back with enough big-name talent to fill a basketball squad. Carol Burnett, George Hearn, John Barrowman, Ruthie Henshall, and Bronson Pinchot star. The bench is strong, too: Kathie Lee Gifford will replace Burnett on Tuesdays starting Dec. 7. $30–80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3. *Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).*

Ragtime—A musical based on E. L. Doctorow's historical novel, with a book by Terrence McNally and music by the composer-lyricist team of Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens. $60–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 1/18/97. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4100).*

The Rainmaker—In this revival of N. Richard Nash's family drama, Woody Harrelson plays a drawling, garrulous Starbuck, a con artist who tries to bring rain and fantasy to a parched farm. Also starring Jayne Atkinson. $25–$65. Tues.–Sun. at 8. Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. *Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

Saturday Night Fever—Flared pants! $30–$80. Tues.–Sun. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (212-307-4100).*

The Scarlet Pimpernel—Frank Wildhorn's celebration of romance, fabric, and the guillotine returns, after a wee summer hiatus. Carolee Carmello, who nabbed a 1999 Tony nomination for her moving performance as Lucille Frank in *Parade,* takes over the female lead. $45–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd. St. (212-307-4100).*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—A blues and rock-and-roll revue, drawn from the songbook of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $65–$75. Through 1/16/00. *At the Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (212-239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

Tango Argentino—Not to be confused with the more recent musical *Forever Tango* or the films *The Tango Lesson* or *Tango,* this dance-musical spurred a Latin-dance revival when it hit Broadway in 1985 and scored Tony nominations for Best Musical, Best Choreography, and Best Director. Nearly 30 dancers attempt to distinguish themselves from the teeming, twirling masses. $25–$75. Call for schedule. *Gershwin Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (212-307-4100).*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Off Broadway
Previews and Openings

Adam Baum and the Jew Movie—Ron Liebman stars in Daniel Goldfarb's new play. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 5. In previews for a 12/12 opening. *McGinn/Cazale Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-279-4200).*

Another American: Asking & Telling—Don't ask, don't tell? Marc Wolf asked 150 people what they thought of gays in the military, including many gay military soldiers and veterans. Now, in a production directed by Joe Mantello, he will tell their stories in an Anna Deveare Smith–style monologue. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. Previews begin 12/7 for a 12/16 opening. Through 2/6/00. *The New Group at Theatre @ St. Clements, 423 W. 46th St. (212-279-4200).*

Bomb-itty of Errors—A funky, fresh "add-rap-tation" of the Bard's classic. $20–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opens 12/12. *45 Bleecker, 45 Bleecker St., at Lafayette St. (212-307-4100).*

Elsa Edgar—Bob Kingdom, known for his pieces on Dylan Thomas and Truman Capote, here commingles the spirits of two gossip queens: Elsa Maxwell and J. Edgar Hoover. Casey Childs directs. Call for schedule; most nights at eight. In previews for a 12/15 opening. Through 1/16/00. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (212-333-4052).*

Hamlet—Liev Schreiber, hailed by many as his generation's finest Shakespearean actor, stars in the Public Theater's new production, directed by Andrei Serban. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2, and some Sunday evenings. In previews for a 12/19 opening. *The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).*

If Memory Serves—Elizabeth Ashley stars in a new comedy about a washed up sitcom mom who receives unexpected press when her son (Sam Tram-

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- Ben Brantley, The New York Times

♫ Exactly the sort of good-time Broadway show that folks say they don't make anymore. It'll keep you smiling into the next century! ♫ - Michael Sommers, The Star-Ledger

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- Linda Winer, Newsday

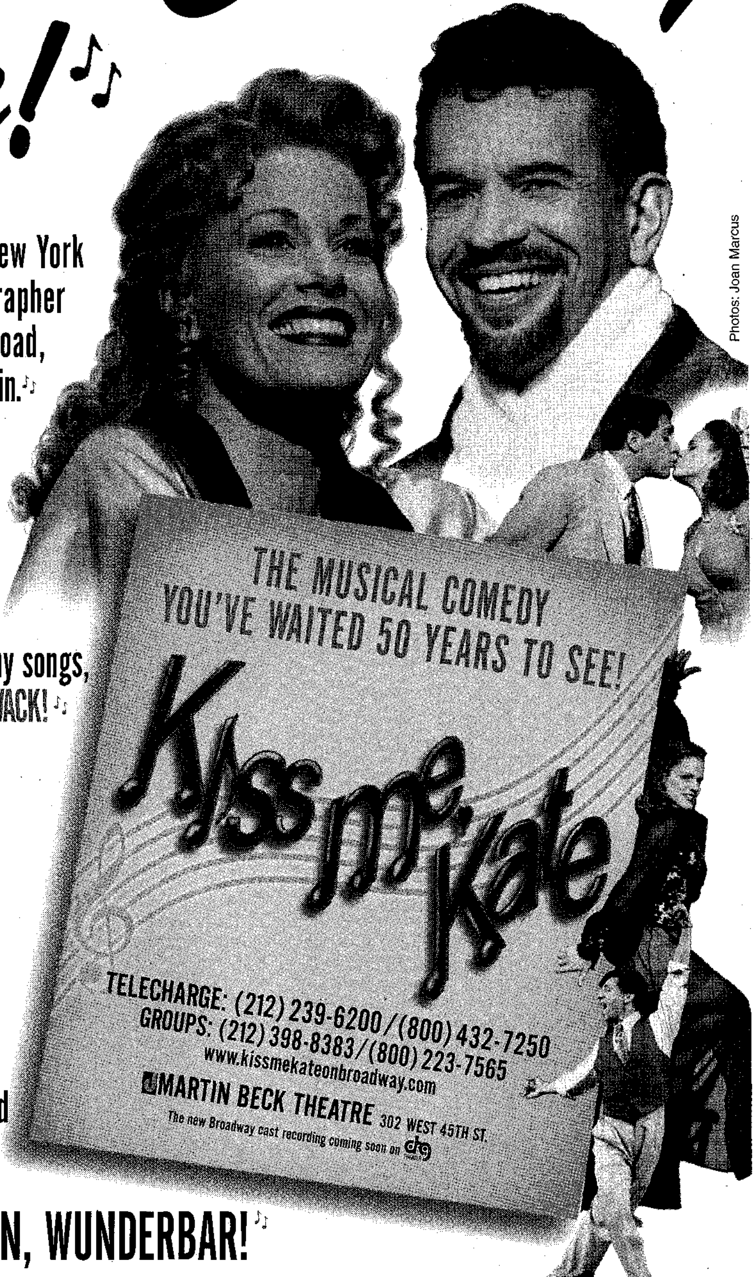
♫ This is what Broadway musicals are supposed to do: Make us feel really good! ♫ - Jacques le Sourd, Gannett Newspapers

♫ **BRIAN STOKES MITCHELL** and **MARIN MAZZIE** are Broadway's reigning musical comedy couple! It doesn't get any better than this! ♫ - Pat Collins, UPN9-TV

♫ Fresh and funny! **AMY SPANGER** is wonderfully sexy and **MICHAEL BERRESSE** is dashing! ♫ - David Patrick Stearns, USA Today

♫ WUNDERBAR, WUNDERBAR AND, AGAIN, WUNDERBAR! ♫

- Clive Barnes, New York Post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mell) reveals family scandals that would put the Barrymores to shame. $47.50–49.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/8 opening. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jolson & Co.—Did he say "My Mammy?" Al Jolson's memory thrives in this new musical adaptation, starring Stephen Mo Hanan. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. In previews for a 12/9 opening. Through 1/2/00. *Theatre at Saint Peter's, 619 Lexington Ave., at 54th St. (212-239-6200).*

A Joyous Christmas Concert—Betty Buckley, Victor Garber, Julie Harris, and Cherry Jones will perform carols and new material by Terrence McNally with the chorus of St. Bartholomew's in this Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS benefit performance. $35–$150. 12/13 and 12/14 at 7:30. *St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 51st St. (212-378-0248).*

Our Sinatra—Kurt Stamm directs this tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes, now transferred from a successful run at the Algonquin Hotel. Featuring Eric Comstock, Christopher Gines, and Hilary Kole. $50–$80. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Previews begin 12/8 for a 12/19 opening. *Blue Angel Theatre, 323 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

True History and Real Adventures—Kathleen Chalfant, last seen in *Wit*, is back, and everyone is anxious to see if she'll be adored again when she returns to the stage in Sybille Pearson's new play. As excited as the rest of us, Angela Goethals plays a young Scottish woman who leads a ragtag band of teens on a cross-country road trip out West, where they finally meet Calamity Jane, played by Chalfant. $45. Call for schedule. In previews for a 12/13 opening. *Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. (212-353-0303).*

Y2K—In Arthur Kopit's thriller, two happy New York capitalists (James Naughton and Patricia Kalember) are stalked by a disturbing rogue with an e-mail account; the very busy Bob Balaban directs. $20–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7,. Sat. and Sun. at 2:30. In previews for a 12/7 opening. *Lucille Lortel Theater, 121 Christopher St. (212-239-6200).*

Now Playing

Ancestral Voices—A. R. Gurney's family story about divorce in a Buffalo family returns to Lincoln Center, with a rotating cast of Broadway veterans assuming the key roles. This is a reading only, so most actors will have scripts firmly in hand. $45. Sun. at 7:30, Mon. at 8. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. $45–$55. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).*

Carrin Beginning—In 1927, a group of pubcrawlers encounter "the last of the great bards of Ireland," in W. August Schulenberg's new play. Presented by Riverside Stage Company. $32.50. Mon. at 8, Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. (212-279-4200).*

Contact—This is billed as "a dance play by Susan Stroman and John Weidman," with what little there is of a play mostly by Weidman and the variety and plenitude of the dancing all Stroman. Its two shorter pieces and concluding longer one are of uneven merit but never without interest. Boyd Gaines, a delightful actor and inspired amateur dancer, performs with aplomb. Backed up by a terrific ensemble, Deborah Yates triumphs as the girl in yellow; as dancer, actress, woman, she is every man's dream and headed for a manifest career. (Simon: 10/25/99.) $60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Country Club—This play by Drama Dept. artistic director Douglas Carter Beane (*As Bees in Honey Drown*) about Wasps in their late twenties who hang out in the Cub Room of a provincial Pennsylvania country club is both funny and moving, devilishly well observed, and niftily constructed. (Simon: 10/4/99.) Jessica Stone has replaced Amy Sedaris. $30. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8. *Greenwich House Theatre, 27 Barrow St. (212-239-6200).*

Opening

Go West, Young Ma'am

Kathleen Chalfant, triumphant, if bald, in the Pulitzer winner 'Wit,' returns to the stage in Sybille Pearson's new play, 'True History and Real Adventures,' opening December 13. A young woman (Angela Goethals, right, with Chalfant) leads a ragtag band of teens on a cross-country road trip until they finally meet Chalfant, and find her playing Calamity Jane. (See "Off Broadway.")

De la Guarda—A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).*

Dinner With Friends—In their Connecticut home, Karen and Gabe are giving a dinner for their friends Beth and Tom, which Tom doesn't attend. It emerges from the heartbroken Beth that her husband has left her for another woman. There is skillful construction here, as well as keen psychological insight. (Simon: 11/22/99.) $30–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. *Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).*

Eclipsed—The Irish Repertory theatre has another small-scale winner in this play about the unwed mothers of Ireland who, as recently as the sixties, were condemned to perpetual slave labor in one of those Magdalene laundries attached to a cloister and under the supervision of mostly fanatical nuns. (Simon: 11/22/99.) $30–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 12/19. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (212-727-2737).*

Enter the Night—The second production of Signature Theatre's Maria Irene Fornes season. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/19. *Signature Theatre, 555 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).*

The Exact Center of the Universe—If you're in the mood for a delightful, old-fashioned, well-made play, look no further than this one by Joan Vail Thorne. It concerns one of those prim yet feisty southern matrons, Vada Love Powell, and her middle-aged son Apple, whom she just about turned into a sissy, until he meets two extraordinary young women. As Vada, Frances Sternhagen is good enough to eat. (Simon: 4/19/99.) $17.50–$47.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, and Sun. at 3. *Century Theatre, 111 E. 15th St. (212-239-6200).*

An Experiment With an Air Pump—Shelagh Stephenson's play deals with two groups of people in the same house in 1799 and 1999. Her play concerns stubborn problems: head versus heart, art versus science, the souring of love in marriage, the tantalizing survival of the past, and the transience or persistence of both fame and infamy. (Simon: 11/15/99.) $50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30, Sun. at 7. *MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).*

Forbidden Broadway Cleans Up Its Act—Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof. $45–$47.50. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat at 2:30, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available, optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (212-239-6200).*

Fuddy Meers—This is a deftly zany absurdist comedy by David Lindsay-Abaire, a young but already much-produced playwright. The heroine, Claire, suffers from psychogenic amnesia, waking up every morning as a blank slate, on which her husband and Kenny, her teenage son from a former marriage, must imprint the facts of her life, only to have her forget them overnight. The evening explodes with laughter, magisterially provided by Robert Stanton, J. Smith-Cameron, Keith Nobbs, Patrick Breen, Marylouise Burke, Mark McKinney, and Lisa Gorlitsky. (Simon: 11/15/99.) $40. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30. Sat. and Sun. at 3. *MTC Stage 2 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).*

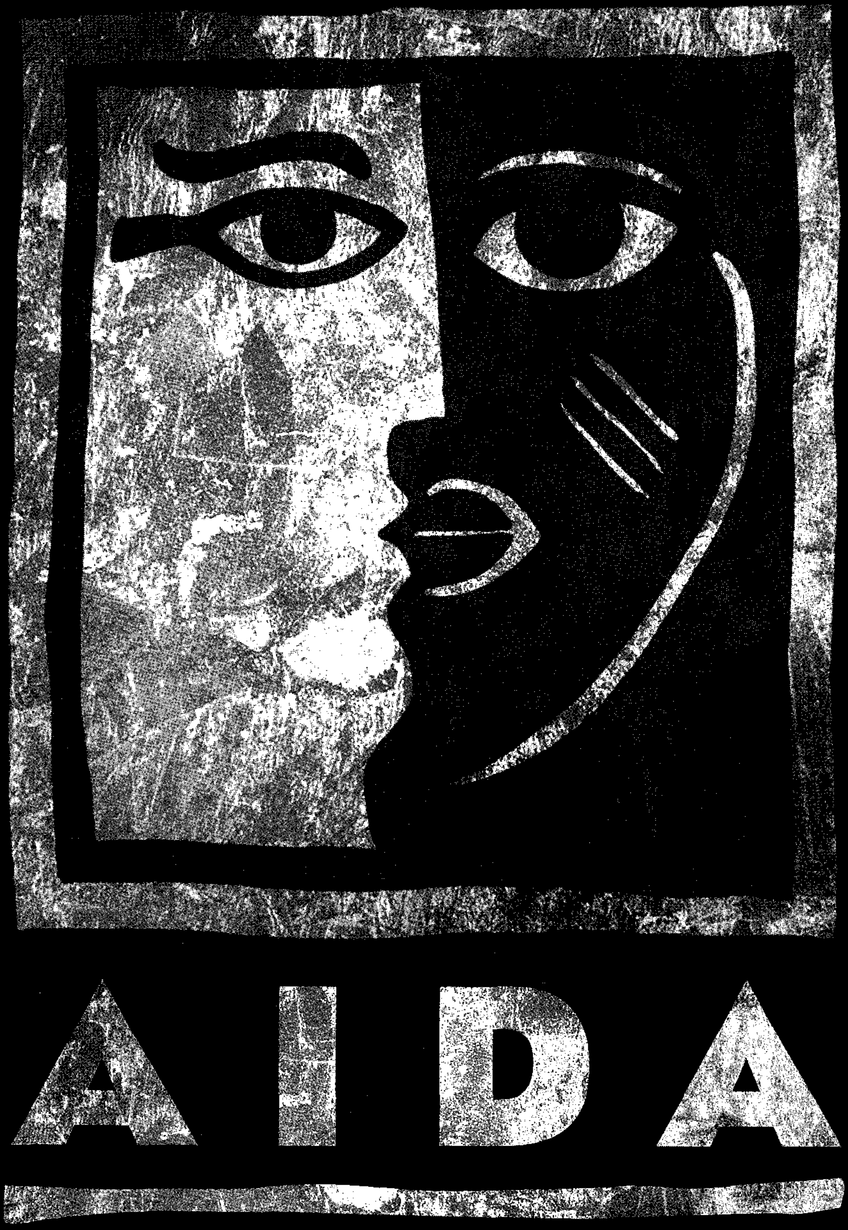
Ghosts—Henrik Ibsen's family tragedy, featuring Kathleen Garrett. Directed by J. C. Compton. $25. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 8. *Century Center Ballroom Theatre, 111 E. 15 St. (212-279-4200).*

Give Me Your Answer, Do!—The Roundabout presents the New York premiere of Brian Friel's most recent play, about the rivalries between two writers—one with success and no self-respect, the other with self-respect and no success. Eight names shine over the marquee, including Kate Burton, Michael Emerson, and John Glover. $55. Tues.–Sat. At 7:30. Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. *Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (212-777-4900).*

Hedwig and the Angry Inch—A German transsexual achieves self-actualization and tabloid fame through songwriting in this brave, beautiful rock musical by John Cameron Mitchell. Stephen Trask did the catchy music and lyrics; now starring Ally Sheedy. $19.99–$49.50. Mon., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 8 and 11, Sat. at 7 and 10. Sun. at 7.

.Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

TICKETS ON SALE NOW
ELTON JOHN AND TIM RICE'S



PERFORMANCES BEGIN FEBRUARY 25
Ticketmaster: (212) 307-4747 Groups: (212) 541-8457
Order online: www.ticketmaster.com

On Broadway ⇒N⇐ Palace Theatre, Broadway & 47th Street

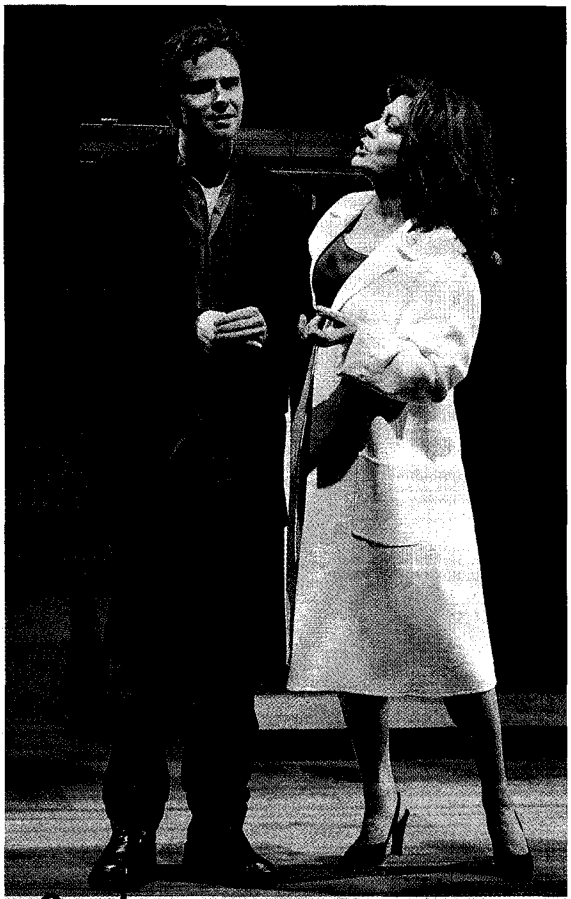
Opened: 2/14/98. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (212-239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue is about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love. $49.50–$52.50. Mon. and Tues. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2:30 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).*

Ice Island: The Wait for Shackleton—Marjorie Duffield's new play documents the lives of a group of men stranded in Antarctica. Lori Steinberg directs. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Melting Pot Theatre, 311 W. 43rd St. (212-279-4200).*

In the Blood—*See Simon, p. 73.* Inspired by Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter,* playwright Susan-Lori Parks presents her play about a struggling single mom. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 12/19. *Joseph Papp Public Theater, 425 Lafayette (212-239-6200).*

Inappropriate—The Desisto School's musical teenagers return to Manhattan to show those fuddy-duddies over at *Rent* what youth sounds like today. $30–$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 1/15/00. *Theatre Row Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. (212-279-4200).*



Opening

Home Sweet Tabloid

In the new comedy 'If Memory Serves,' Elizabeth Ashley plays everyone's favorite sitcom star, past her prime and yearning for a comeback; her directionless son (Sam Trammell, above, with Ashley) searches for meaning and finds the tabloid press instead. In previews for a December 8 opening. (See "Off Broadway.")

The Jazz Singer—A new musical version of the Samson Raphaelson play that Al Jolson made famous, presented by the Jewish Rep. $35. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Wed. at 2. Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (212-831-2000).*

John Gabriel Borkman—Pearl Theatre presents Henrik Ibsen's tough drama. Directed by Shepard Sobel. $26–33. Tues., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat. and Sun. at 2. *Pearl Theatre Company, 80 St. Marks Pl. (212-598-9802).*

Keep Bangin'—Soft-shoe-shufflin' Savion Glover directs the talented bucket drummers of *Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk.* $20–$40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Players Theatre, 115 Macdougal St. (212-239-6200).*

A Klezmer's Tale: Yoshke Muzikant—Now that klezmer's overrun hipster joints in the Lower East Side, Eleanor Reissa directs a Folksbiene Yiddish Theatre production that sketches the life of poet and musician Muzikant. Starring Mina Bern. $30–$35. Wed. and Thurs. at 2 and 8, Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 5:30. Through 1/16/00. *Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. (212-239-6200).*

Last Train to Nibroc—Arlene Hutton's two-character romantic comedy, set in Kentucky during World War II. Michael Montel directs. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).*

Maybe Baby, It's You—After their successful run at the Currican Theatre earlier this summer, playwright-performers Shari Simpson and Charlie Shanian play eleven couples in this well-reviewed romantic comedy. $35–$47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 6. *SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).*

Morning, Noon and Night—Spalding Gray explores a day with his beloved family. $25–$45. Sun. and Mon. at 7:30. *Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).*

Naked Boys Singing—Just like a musical revue but without pants. $45–$65. Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri. at 8; Sat. at 7 and 10; Sun. at 3 and 8. *Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-463-0060).*

The Passion of Frida Kahlo—Priscilla López (*A Day in Hollywood, A Night in the Ukraine*) plays the artist Kahlo in Dolores Sendler's much-praised play. $45. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *ArcLight Theatre, 152 W. 71st St. (212-307-4100).*

Savannah Bay—A new production of the Marguerite Duras play stars Peg Small and India Blake. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8:30, Sun. at 3. Through 12/19. *Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave. bet. 9th and 10th Sts. (212-279-4200).*

Shyster—In this star-bright production of Bryan Goluboff's play, a young Israeli man battles a black tenant over the legacy of his father's building. Featuring Fisher Stevens, Annabella Sciorra, and Phyllis Newman; directed by Dante Albertie. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 5. *Blue Heron Arts Center, 121 E. 24th St. (212-279-4200).*

Space—Tina Landau corrals abductees, a neuropsychiatrist, and a SETI researcher in her evocative piece on mortality, spirituality, and the limits of science. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. *Joseph Papp Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St (212-239-6200).*

Squonk—Props, puppetry, and percussion at the East Village's newest theater. $20–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Bleecker East Theatre, 49 Bleecker St. (212-239-6200).*

Stars in Your Eyes—Lost souls find love in this Kennedy-era musical. $49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (212-239-6200).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show. $24.50–$49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (212-477-2477).*

Sun Flower: The Life and Loves of Elizabeth Cady Stanton—Elizabeth Perry channels the suffragist. $25. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/12. *John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-479-8513).*

Thwak—"We are bringing mime into the new millennium," proclaims one of the hilarious, kinetic Australian Umbilical Brothers. "And how are we doing it? With sound." $15–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane (212-307-4100).*

The Trial of One Short-Sighted Black Woman vs. Mammy Louise and Safreeta Mae—Barbara Montgomery stars in this comedic drama about black professional women who engage outlandish, outdated stereotypes of mammies. $25. Wed.–Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. Through 12/12. *Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. (212-353-1176).*

Trudy Blue—Marsha Norman, who won a Pulitzer for *'Night Mother,* presents a play about a successful novelist (*Thirtysomething* vet Polly Draper) who struggles with cancer and the chattering voices in her head. $25–$30. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (212-727-7765).*

Uncle Jack—Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* with a West Virginia drawl. Gerald Anthony stars in this Worth Street adaptation's premiere. $25–$35. Mon., Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3. *Tribeca Playhouse, 111 Reade St. (212-604-4195).*

The Vagina Monologues—Eve Ensler's ode to fannyboos, nappy dugouts, twats, etc. returns for a second coming. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).*

Wit—Can a play be made out of the last hours of a professor of literature dying of ovarian cancer? A play that hinges on a close reading of Donne's *Holy Sonnets*? That, without slighting its seriousness, sees the comedy in dying? No? Think again: Margaret Edson, with her firstling effort, has managed it, and more. For this play alone, she should be handed the Harvard English department, along with her Pulitzer. (Simon: 9/28/98.) Now starring Judith Light. $35–$49.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (212-307-4100).*

Off-Off Broadway

1839—GAle GAtes et al presents a massive multimedia performance incorporating puppetry, projections, and dance in its huge performance space. $15–$25. Tues.–Sat. at 9. Through 12/18. *GAle GAtes et al, 37 Main St., Brooklyn (718-522-4597).*

The Filament Cycle—Tea Algic, a Balkan artist, and Thaddeus Phillips, an American actor and puppeteer, present a multimedia work in which a Balkan refugee meets an American filmmaker. $12. Thurs.–Sun. at 8, Sun. at 3. 12/9–12/19. *La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).*

Refuge—Neil Pepe directs Jessica Goldberg's new play, in which an older sister is forced to take care of her siblings when her parents cut out of town. $25. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 12/12. *Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. (212-279-4200).*

Smile When You're Traveling—A one-man show by rocker-cum-actor Henry Rollins. $25–$30. 12/7–12/12 at 8:30. *Westbeth Theater Center, 151 Bank St. (212-307-4100).*

Vampire Dreams—Sci-fi novelist Suzy McKee Charnas, winner of both Hugo and Nebula awards, bares her fangs in this new production. $12. Wed.–Mon. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 12/18. *Altered Stages, 212 W. 29th St. (212-760-5940).*

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

art

Tony Feher...L.C. Armstrong...Andy Warhol

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Milton Avery—A selection of paintings by the American modernist, whose unorthodox use of color and simplified, almost abstract images of figures and landscapes influenced Mark Rothko, Adolph Gottlieb, and other abstract painters; through 1/22/00. Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (212-794-0550).

Isabel De Obaldía—New cast-glass sculptures of mysterious figures that combine human, animal, and plant characteristics by the Panamanian artist; through 12/24. Martin, 23 E. 73th St. (212-288-2213).

Istvan Farkas—A survey of paintings and works on paper by the Hungarian artist (1887–1944), who was a member of the Ecole de Paris and whose work has not been exhibited in the U.S. since 1930; through 3/31/00. Gat, 1100 Madison Ave. (212-327-0441).

Jan Müller/Bob Thompson—Paintings by the two figurative expressionists, many of which come from private collections and have not been exhibited since they were first acquired; through 1/7/00. Bookstein, 50 E. 78th St. (212-439-9605).

Richard Serra—New works on paper; through 2/14/00. Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (212-228-2828).

Hiro Yokose—Small-scale oil-and-beeswax paintings that depict pared-down atmospheric landscapes; through 12/31. Winston Wächter, 39 E. 78th St. (212-327-2526).

57th Street Area

Dorothea Tanning—New oil paintings of imaginary flowers by the 89-year-old artist; through 1/15/00. Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (212-752-1223).

Sam Francis—Paintings and works on paper from the fifties characterized by fields of transparent cell-like forms and planes of vivid color; through 12/30. Rubin, Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave. (212-445-0444).

Lawrence Gipe—New large-scale paintings that depict imagery appropriated from German photo journals and magazines from the mid-to-late thirties; 12/8–1/22/00. Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (212-245-2888).

Cynthia Knott—Recent paintings that depict seascapes at dusk on the northwest coast of Ireland; through 1/8/00. DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-247-2111).

Cildo Meireles—An installation by the Brazilian artist consisting of two ten-foot-square transparent cubes made of glass and aluminum that can be entered; through 1/15/00. Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (212-315-0470).

Ray Smith/Julio Galán—Recent paintings and works from the eighties by both; through 1/6/00. Barquet, 41 E. 57th St. (212-644-9090).

Abigail Varela—Bronze sculptures of the female figure; through 1/12/00. Perlow, 41 E. 57th St. (212-644-7171).

Chen Yifei—Recent paintings of scenes in Old Shanghai, landscapes, and women, by a Chinese artist; through 1/15/00. Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (212-541-4900).

SoHo and TriBeCa

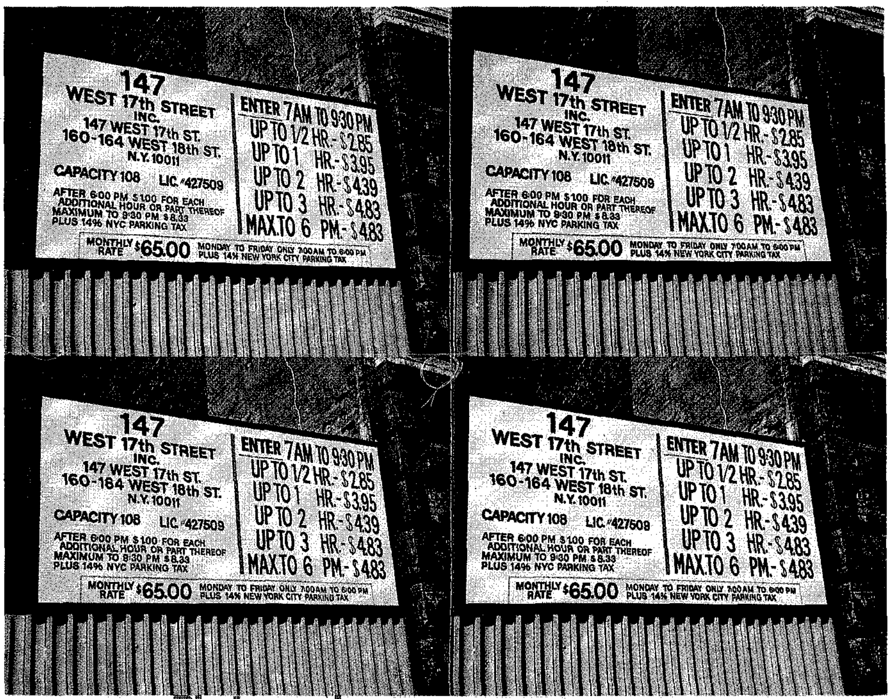
George Condo—New paintings that depict abstracted portraits of jazz musicians; through 1/15/00. PaceWildenstein, 142 Greene St. (212-431-9224).

Michael Craig-Martin—Recent large-scale wall paintings and works on canvas by the British artist; through 1/20/00. Blum, 99 Wooster St. (212-343-0441).

Keith Haring—Several series of ink drawings made during the second to last month of the artist's life and one mural-size painting; through 12/30. Deitch Projects, 75 Grand St. (212-343-7300).

Elaine Lustig-Cohen—Recent collages that combine the artist's own photographs and painting; through 1/15/00. Saul, 560 Broadway (212-431-0747).

Gordon Matta-Clark—Works from the early seven-



Photograph courtesy of Paul Kasmin.

Photography

Stitches Just in Time

No artist ever used photography and the repetition of banal images more adroitly than Andy Warhol. From the time he began collecting photographs of movie stars, at age 11, the artist was undoubtedly developing the ideas that culminated decades later with his sixties-era photo-booth pictures of Holly Solomon, Edie Sedgwick, and others, not to mention his "Disaster" paintings, whose grisly silk-screened images of car crashes and other mayhem were based on tabloid and police photos. Warhol's own first efforts as a photographer paralleled and often served as studies for his painted portraits (his candid shots of Truman Capote, Diana Vreeland, and others eventually filled a book, *Andy Warhol's Exposures*), but the artist—known to cite Jackie-chaser Ron Galella as the world's greatest living photographer—was quietly stockpiling his serious stuff: black-and-white images of street signs, billboards, cars, Oriental rugs, and other commonplace sights and objects. It wasn't until the early eighties, when interest in his paintings flagged, that Warhol began duplicating those photographs into sets of four, six, nine, and twelve, and, taking an idea from his photographer friend Christopher Makos, had the prints stitched together on a sewing machine. The resulting "stitched photographs," shown for the first time at Robert Miller Gallery in 1987 (currently on view at Paul Kasmin, 293 Tenth Avenue; through December 30), immediately revived Warhol's career. By combining machine-made stitches with his own repeated images, creating patterns and celebrating coincidence all at once, Warhol proved himself once again an impresario of the ordinary. EDITH NEWHALL ties that involved recycling of materials and objects; through 12/24. Zwirner, 43 Greene St. (212-966-4360).

Dan McCleary/Robert Harms—New Paintings/New works on paper. Through 121/23. Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (212-219-2863).

Issey Miyake—A survey of the clothing designer's work from the past 30 years; through 2/29/00. Ace, 275 Hudson St. (212-255-5599).

Juliao Sarmento—A film installation; 12/9–1/22/00. Kelly, 43 Mercer St. (212-343-2405).

Richard Serra—New etchings based on the artist's *Rounds* and *Torqued Ellipses* sculptures; through 12/31. Gemini G.E.L. at Weyl, 375 W. Broadway (212-219-1446).

Thomas Woodruff—A two-gallery show of recent paintings; through 12/24, at P.P.O.W., 476 Broome St. (212-941-8642), and Debs, 529 W. 20th St. (212-647-7080).

Rob Wynne—Thread drawings on vellum, paintings, hand-glazed ceramic tiles, and hand-blown glass sculptures that draw on texts by Louis Aragon and André Breton, eighteenth-century decorative art, and art history; through 12/23. Solomon, 172 Mercer St. (212-941-5777).

Aletha Zapf—An interactive slide-projection installation that transforms the gallery into a dark, mazelike setting whose walls are illuminated with life-size images of tourists; through 12/31. Lee, 377 Broome St. (212-343-3950).

Chelsea

Reed Anderson—Drawings made on pieces of folded paper the artist carries in his pocket and uses for notes and doodles; through 1/8/00. Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. (212-243-5937).

Suzan Batu—Abstract paintings incorporating pompoms, costume jewels, glitter, and other materials; through 1/8/00. Coploff, 526 W. 26th St. (212-741-1149).

Richmond Burton—Recent abstract paintings; through 1/1/00. Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (212-242-7727).

Peter Doig—New paintings; through 12/18. Brown's Enterprise, 436 W. 15th St. (212-627-5258).

Tony Feher—New sculptures inspired by consumer culture; through 12/23. D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-352-9460).

Dan Flavin—A selection of the late artist's fluorescent light sculptures dating from the late sixties to the eighties; 12/11–1/29/00. Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (212-255-1105).

Martin Honert—Two large-scale sculptures inspired by the children's tale *The Flying Classroom;* through 12/24. Marks, 523 W. 24th St. (212-243-0200).

Glenn Ligon/Kara Walker—New drawings using coal dust and carborundum over images taken from the 1995 Million Man March/A large-scale work combining drawing and cut-paper illustration, and a set of works on paper from 1995. Through 1/8/00. Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-929-2262).

Matthew McCaslin—Recent assemblages that combine children's wagons, televisions, and colored lights; through 1/15/00. Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. (212-929-0500).

Stuart Netsky—Abstract paintings made with beauty products; through 1/29/00. Anderson, 453 W. 17th St. (212-463-0970).

Richard Serra—A new sculpture inaugurating the gallery's Chelsea space; through 1/14/00. Gagosian, 555 W. 24th St. (212-228-2828).

Pat Steir—New abstract paintings whose splashes of color were created through the Japanese technique of "flung ink"; through 1/1/00. Marlborough Chelsea, 211 W. 19th St. (212-463-8634).

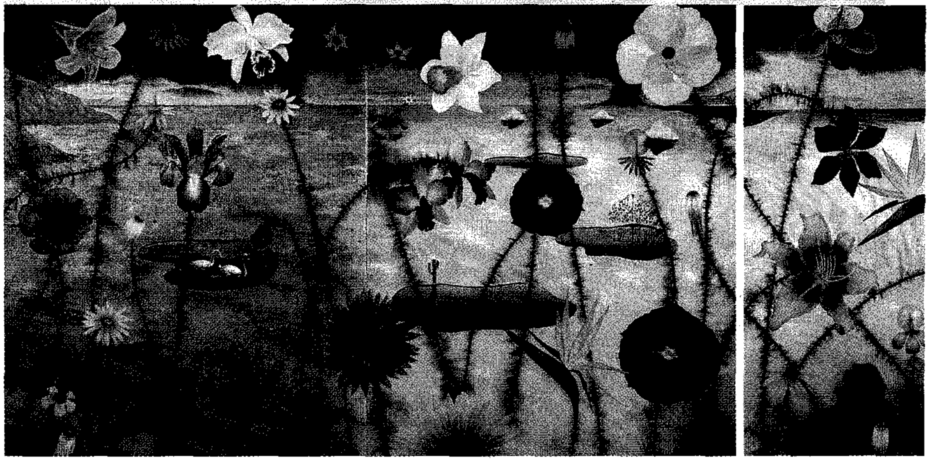
Thomas Sheibitz/Markus Baenziger—New works by both; through 1/15/00. Bonakdar Jancoe, 521 W. 21st St. (212-414-4144).

Thomas Woodruff—A two-gallery show of recent paintings; through 12/23, at Debs, 529 W. 20th St. (212-647-7080) and P.P.O.W., 476 Broome St. (212-941-8642).

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Talent **Sealed under a shieldlike layer of resin, L.C. Armstrong's paintings of towering exotic flowers against panoramic landscapes bring to mind the creepy fauna of *The Little Shop of Horrors* and the primordial South American vistas of Frederick Edwin Church. But it's clear that Armstrong's visions have more to do with the apocalypse than with paradise lost. One hint? The flowers' stems are burned into the canvas with bomb fuses. At Postmasters Gallery, 459 West 19th Street; through December 18.**



Photograph courtesy of Postmasters Gallery.

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Hirschl & Adler—21 E. 70th St. (212-535-8810). A survey chronicling the development of the fine and decorative arts in Boston between 1810 and 1840, with furniture by Emmons & Archibald, silver by Churchill & Treadwell, and artworks by Audubon, Cole, Stuart, others; through 2/5/00.

57th Street Area

Adams—41 W. 57th St. (212-644-5665). Contemporary Latin American works featuring religious imagery by Alfonzo, Azaceta, Bedia, Chagoya, Palazyan, Roche-Rabell, Zenil, others; through 12/24.

Krugier—41 E. 57th St. (212-755-7288). Still-life paintings and works on paper by Beckmann, Braque, Giacometti, Picasso, Morandi, Redon, others; through 1/15/00.

St. Etienne—24 W. 57th St. (212-245-6734). "Saved From Europe," an exhibition celebrating the gallery's sixtieth anniversary, with works by Klimt, Kokoschka, Kollwitz, Schiele, others; through 1/8/00.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Art in General—79 Walker St. (212-219-0473). "Point of View: Between Two Cities/Punto de Vista" Entre Dos Cuidades (Will Remain Anonymous)," a project between five New York–based and five Mexico City–based artists who created imaginary characters based on swapped information in the form of video, audio, photographs, e-mail correspondence, and other media; through 1/8/00.

Artists Space—33 Greene St. (212-226-3970). "Made Especially for You," site- and audience-specific works by Asbury, Brannon, Giannotti; a full-scale dwelling by New York–based architect Toshiko Mori; through 1/15/00.

Exit Art—548 Broadway (212-966-7745). "Choice 99," works by emerging artists selected by Antoni, Goldin, Kearns, LeWitt, Sultan, and others; through 12/31.

Kent—67 Prince St. (212-966-4500). "The Xmas Project," organized by the New York and Munich-based artist's collaborative, Department for Public Appearances, featuring works by more than 110 artists from the United States and abroad; through 12/23.

Thread Waxing Space—476 Broadway (212-966-9520). Video installation by Maura Jasper; "Mr. Fascination," group show of works inspired by John Cassavetes's films; through 1/15/00.

Chelsea

Art Resources Transfer—210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-5956). Projects by Mark Sheinman and John Zinsser, Steve Diehl and Philip Taaffe; an installation by Kim Abeles; project wall by Michael Behle; bookstore project by Linda Daniels; through 12/31.

Greene Naftali—526 W. 26th St. (212-463-7770). "Snowflake Office," works by fourteen young German artists working in various media; through 1/22/00.

Kempner—501 W. 23rd St. (212-206-6872). Prints made in 1968 by Johns, Rauschenberg, Rosenquist, Warhol, others; through 12/30.

Photography

Brassaï—Photographs, including many from his first book, *Paris de Nuit,* from the artist's wife's collection; through 1/8/00. Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-750-7070).

Danziger—851 Madison Ave. (212-734-5300). "American Photographs, Part 3: 1968–1999," with works by Avedon, Fuss, Liebovitz, Mann, Mapplethorpe, Penn, others; through 12/24.

John Dugdale—Recent cyanotypes inspired by the poems of Emily Dickinson; through 1/9/00. Wessel + O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. (212-242-8811).

Larry Gianettino/Jayne Hinds Bidaut—Cibachrome prints of very small toys/New photogram tintypes of animal and human skeletons. Through 1/15/00. Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. (212-627-4819).

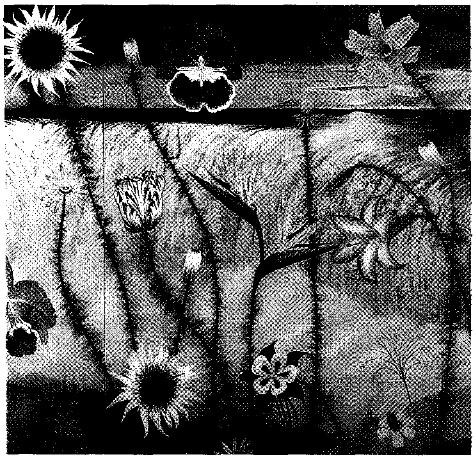
Andras Gursky—New large-scale color photographs depicting vast interior spaces, among them views of merchandise in a discount store in Los Angeles, a massive hotel atrium in Taipei, and the stacks of a library in Stockholm; through 1/15/00. Marks, 522 W. 24th St. (212-243-0200).

Hiro—A small retrospective of fashion photographs from the sixties and seventies, celebrity portraits, and iconic images such as the *Apollo 11* spaceship launch of 1969; through 1/15/00. Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (212-759-7999).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (212-860-1777), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (voluntary contribution 5–8), Sat. and Sun. 10–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. "Propaganda and Dreams: Photographing the 1930s in the USSR and U.S." A comparison of Farm Security Administration photography created in the U.S. and Socialist Realist pictures produced in the USSR; through 2/13/00.

Jose Picayo—Still-life photographs whose compositions bring to mind paintings by seventeenth-century Dutch masters; through 1/15/00. Robin Rice, 325 W. 11th St. (212-366-6660).

Oscar Muñoz—Conceptual works that combine drawing, sculpture, and photographic processes; through 1/8/00. Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. (212-223-1059).



Newseum—580 Madison Ave. (212-317-7596), Mon.–Sat. 10–5:30; free. "*Vanity Fair* and the Birth of the Modern Age: Portraits, 1914–1936." Images of the celebrities of the day shot for the magazine by Abbott, de Mayer, Man Ray, Steichen, others; through 1/3/00. . . . "The Century in Times Square." The evolution of New York's most famous gathering place as told through photographs from the archives of the New York *Times;* through 1/29/00.

Dennis Stock—Images of actors, hippies, bikers, and jazz musicians spanning the photo-essayist's career since the early fifties, as well as impressionistic color studies of flowers and landscape; through 1/22/00. Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (212-966-6223).

Thomas Struth—New photographs of jungles; through 12/31. Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (212-977-7160).

Andy Warhol—"Stitched," photographs made by the artist between 1976 and 1986 in which he shot an image, duplicated it into sets of four or six, then had the prints stitched together with white thread on a sewing machine; through 12/30. Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave. (212-563-4474).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"The Beaded Universe: Strands of Culture." The largest and most comprehensive survey of the art of beads, including beaded talismans; religious artifacts from the Buddhist, Christian, and Islamic faiths; and purses and costumes; through 1/30/00. 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., and Sun. 10–6, Thurs. 10–8 (pay what you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"Body Art: Marks of Identity." The history of body art in the United States, Europe, Africa, New Zealand, and elsewhere, highlighting objects and practices dating back to circa 2000 B.C.; through 8/30. . . . "The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter." An exhibition of 300 to 500 live, free-flying butterflies from Central, South, and North America housed in a vivarium that approximates the butterflies' natural habitat; through 2/28/00. Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children (admission to "The Butterfly Conservatory" is by timed entry; tickets, which can be reserved in advance and include museum admission, are $14 adults, $8.50 children).

Asia Society—"China: Fifty Years Inside the People's Republic." A survey of images of China by 33 photographers from Asia, Europe, and the United States; through 1/2/00. 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (212-517-ASIA), Tues.–Sat. 11–6, Sun. 12–5, Thurs. 11–8 (6–8 free admission); $4, $2 students and seniors.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Sensation: Young British Artists From the Saatchi Collection." The much-discussed exhibition that originated at the Royal Academy in London, of paintings, sculpture, photographs, and installations by 42 artists, among them Jake and Dinos Chapman, Tracey Emin, Damien Hirst, Sarah Lucas, and Rachel Whiteread; through 1/9/00. . . . "Eastman Johnston: Painting America." The first major exhibition of the nineteenth-century American artist's work in 25 years, including paintings and drawings of rural subjects, Civil War scenes, interior scenes, and portraits; through 2/6/00. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors (admission to "Sensation" is $9.75 adults, $7.75 students and seniors, and includes general admission).

China Institute—"The Resonance of the Qin in East Asian Art." Works from China and Japan from the first to the nineteenth centuries that celebrate the qin, an ancient Chinese musical instrument known for its power to harmonize the soul, including paintings, drawings, wood-block prints, and sculpture; through 12/12. 125 E. 65th St. (212-744-8181), Mon.–Sat. 10–5, Tues. and Thurs. 10–8, Sun. 1–5; free.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution—"Two Views of Venice: Canaletto and Menpes." Fifty rare prints depicting scenes of Venice by Giovanni Antonio Canal (1697–1768), the celebrated Venetian painter, and Mortimer Menpes (1855–1938), an Australian-born British artist; through 12/19. . . . "The Work of Charles and Ray Eames: A Legacy of Invention." A major retrospective of works by the husband-and-wife team considered among the greatest designers of the twentieth century, featuring their furniture, buildings, toys, films, and photographs dating from the forties to the seventies; through 1/9/00. 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (5–9, free admission); $8, $3 students and seniors.

Dia—"Donald Judd *Untitled*, 1976." A piece from 1976 that is considered one of the late artist's seminal works and comprises fifteen plywood boxes; through 6/18/00. . . . "Thomas Schütte: Part III: *In Medias Res*"; through 2/28/00. . . . "Robert Irwin: *Excursus: Homage to the Square*"; through 12/30. . . . "Stan Douglas and Douglas Gordon: *Double Vision*"; through 3/30/00. . . . "Time Traced: Rodney Graham and Vera Lutter"; through 6/18/00. 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Drawing Center—"Another City for Another Life: Constant's *New Babylon*." Drawings, models, paintings, and other media produced by the visionary artist Constant for his futuristic *New Babylon* project; through 12/20. 35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166), Tues.–Fri. 10-6, Sat. 11-6; donation suggested.

Frick Collection—"Velázquez in New York Museums." An exhibition of the seventeenth-century Spanish master's portraits organized in conjunction with the Hispanic Society of America, including paintings from the collections of the Frick, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Hispanic Society of America; through 1/16/00. . . . "Watteau and His World: French Drawing From 1700 to 1750." Works on paper by Watteau and by his forebears and followers, among them François Boucher, Nicolas Lancret, and François Lemoyne; through 1/9/00. . . . "Constable's Salisbury Cathedral: Two Versions Reunited." An exhibition pairing two paintings by John Constable (1776–1837); through 12/31. 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"Inverted Odysseys: Claude Cahun, Maya Deren, Cindy Sherman." Photographs, books, collages, films, and props by three women artists whose investigations into self-portraiture involves adopting identities from different social classes and geographic environments, "traveling" into the past and future, and transforming themselves into heroes, villains, mythological creatures, and other archetypes; through 1/29/00. 100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Wed. 11–8, Sat. 11–5 (gallery will be closed from 12/24–1/4/00 for winter recess): $2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"Clemente." A retrospective of paintings, watercolors, pastel drawings, book illustrations, and sculpture spanning the seventies to the present by the Italian-born artist Francesco Clemente; through 1/9/00. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 9–6, Fri. and Sat. 9–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $7 students and seniors.

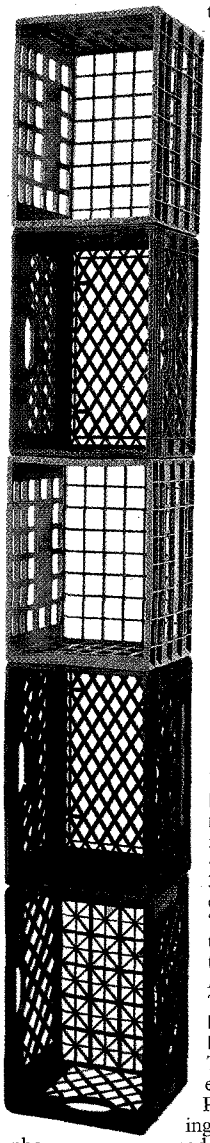
Guggenheim Museum SoHo—"Andy Warhol: The Last Supper." Paintings from the artist's final series, created during the last year of his life for the gallery rooms of a Milan bank located directly opposite the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, where Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper* is located; through 12/30. 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (212-423-3500), Thurs.–Mon. 11–6; free.

Japan Society—"Daido Moriyama: Stray Dog." The first retrospective exhibition of the work of the celebrated Japanese photographer Daido Moriyama, including some 130 vintage prints from the sixties through the nineties, concurrent with an exhibition of prints from Moriyama's 1972 *Hunter* series at the Metropolitan Museum; through 1/2/00. 333 E. 47th St. (212-832-1155), Tues.–Sun. 11–6; $5 suggested contribution.

Jewish Museum—"John Singer Sargent: Portraits of the Wertheimer Family." A group of portraits of the London art dealer Ager Wertheimer and his family painted by the American artist between 1898 and 1908; through 2/6/00. . . . "Berlin Metropolis: Jews and the New Culture, 1890–1918." Artworks, books, letters, posters, and theater memorabilia demonstrating the influence of Jews on culture in turn-of-the-century Berlin; through 4/23/00. . . . "Pickles and Pomegranates: Jewish Homes Near and Far." An interactive children's exhibit that evokes life in two late nineteenth-century Jewish households; through 10/30/00. . . . "The Changing Face of Family: Photographs From the Collection of the Jewish Museum." Photographs illustrating the importance of family in shaping identities, by Avedon, Goldin, Hine, Steichen, Sultan, others; through 2/6/00. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Rock Style." An exhibition exploring the influence of rock stars on fashion, featuring attire lent by rock artists and drawn from the collections of the Met's Costume Institute and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland; 12/9–3/19/00. . . . "Only the Best: Masterpieces of the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon." Works collected by the oil-industry pioneer and philanthropist Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian (1869–1955) on loan from the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, including European paintings ranging from the Renaissance to Impressionism, Egyptian sculpture, Roman medals, Islamic ceramics and textiles, illuminated manuscripts, eighteenth-century French furniture and silver, and objects by Lalique; through 2/27/00. . . . "Portraits by Ingres: Image of an Epoch." An international loan exhibition of portraits by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780–1867), whose paintings of France's ruling elite inspired such artists as Cézanne, Matisse, and Picasso; through 1/2/00. . . . "Carleton Watkins: The Art of Perception." An exhibition of works by the American landscape photographer (1829–1916) best known for his large albumen silver prints of Yosemite Valley taken in the 1860s; through 1/9/00. . . . "A Century of Design, Part I: 1900–1925." Art and Crafts, Art Nouveau, and

On View **Since his first solo New York show in 1993, Tony Feher has demonstrated a knack for sculpture that al*most makes itself: suspended plastic bottles filled with colored* liquid, jars and paper cups of all sizes stacked on the floor, marbles lined up in the patterns of a rug. But his work's childlike simplicity was misleading—the artist, it turns out, is really a latter-day minimalist whose arrangements of commonplace prefabricated objects are anything but random. Indeed, the late Donald Judd seems to have inspired several of Feher's newest works (right, *Untitled,* 1999), which emphasize light and its play over his materials. At D'Amelio Terras, 525 West 22nd Street; through December 23.**



Photograph courtesy of D'Amelio Terras.

Art Deco works from the museum's collection; 12/14–3/26/00. . . . "Daido Moriyama: *Hunter.*" Forty photographs by the Japanese photographer that were shot from the shadows and from the windows of a moving car and published as *Hunter* (1972), a book dedicated to Jack Kerouac; through 1/2/00. . . . "Egyptian Art in the Age of Pyramids." The first major-museum presentation of the art of the Old Kingdom (*c.* 2650–2150 B.C.), featuring approximately 230 masterpieces from the golden era of ancient Egyptian culture; through 1/9/00. . . . "The Artist as Collector: Masterpieces From the C. C. Wang Collection." Old-master Chinese paintings given to the museum by the Wang family over the past twenty years; through 1/9/00. . . . "Annual Christmas Tree and Neapolitan Baroque Crèche"; through 1/9/00. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $10 contribution, $5 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $10, $5 seniors and students.

El Museo del Barrio—"Pepon Osorio: *Transboricua.*" A multimedia installation on the theme of cultural identity in transition and transformation; through 1/9/00. . . . "Pressing the Point: Parallel Expressions in the Graphic Arts of the Chicano and Puerto Rican Movements." An overview of prints and posters created by artists who were active in the artistic and social struggles of the sixties and seventies; through 1/9/00. 1230 Fifth Ave. (212-831-7272), Wed.–Sun. 11–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Museum for African Art—"Liberated Voices: Contemporary Art From South Africa." Paintings, sculptures, installations, photographs, and videos made since the end of apartheid in 1994; through 1/2/00. 593 Broadway (212-966-1313), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $5, $2.50 students, seniors, and children.

Museum of American Folk Art—"Millennial Dreams: Vision and Prophecy in American Folk Art." An exhibition of visionary objects and paintings by self-taught artists on loan from major public institutions and private collections; through 5/14/00. Lincoln Square (212-595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art—"Modern Starts: People." A survey of figural representation in early modernism, with works by Fernand Léger, Sol LeWitt, Pablo Picasso, Odilon Redon, and others; through 3/14/00. . . . "Modern Starts: Places." Interpretations of site, both real and imagined, in paintings, sculpture, photographs, furniture and objects, with works by Paul Cézanne, Maria Fernanda Cardoso, Paul Gauguin, Henri Matisse, Georges-Pierre Seurat, and others; through 3/14/00. . . . "Modern Starts: Things." An exhibition exploring the presentation and representation of ordinary and extraordinary objects, with works by Constantin Brancusi, Marcel Duchamp, Michael Craig-Martin, and others; through 3/14/00. . . . "Projects 69: Julia Jacquette." Paper cups, plates, and napkins designed for MOMA's Café/Etc., a new space in the museum's lower level that combines multimedia projects, a bookstore, and a café; through 3/21/00. . . . "Projects 70: Shirin Neshat, Simon Patterson, Xu Bing." Banners that play with the written word, displayed on the museum's 53rd Street façade; through 5/1/00. 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 10:30–6, Thurs. 10:30–6, Fri. 10:30–8:30 (4:30–8:30 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $10, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"The New York Century: World Capital, Home Town, 1900–2000." An exhibition of objects from the museum's collection conceived by the design firm Pentagram; through 7/9/00. . . . "Forgotten Gateway: The Abandoned Buildings of Ellis Island." A journey through Ellis Island's past and present through the photographs of Larry Racioppo and Shirley Burden; through 2/13/00. . . . "Americanos: Latino Life in the United States." An exhibition of photographs of Latinos by 30 prizewinning photographers from around the country; through 1/2/00. . . . "Fashion on Stage: Couture for Broadway Theater, 1910–1955." Original costumes for Broadway productions by Chanel, Valentina, Mainbocher, Hattie Carnegie, and other designers; through 2/27/00. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5 suggested contribution, $4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology—"Dazzling by Design: Fashion Jewelry by Kenneth Jay Lane." A 40-year retrospective of more than 300 pieces created by the designer of costume jewelry; through 12/31. . . . "Unmistakably Mackie." A retrospective of Bob Mackie's fashion and costume designs; through 12/31. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.

National Academy of Design and School of Fine Arts—"Prague Architecture Through the Centuries." An exhibition exploring the past and the future of Prague through its architecture, including photographs of buildings, paintings, models, and facsimiles of Romanesque and Gothic sculptures; through 1/2/00. . . . "Mastery & Elegance: Two Centuries of French Drawings From the Collection of Jeffrey E. Horvitz." Works on paper by 70 artists, among them Boucher, Fragonard, Greuze, Lorrain, and Poussin; through 12/12. 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 12–5, Fri. 10–6; $8, 4.50 students and seniors.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Cildo Meireles." The first retrospective of the work of the internationally-known Brazilian artist, including room-scale installations and walk-through environments, sculptures, and drawings spanning thirty years; through 3/5/00. 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs.–Sat. 12–8; $6, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library—"Seeing Is Believing: 700 Years of Scientific and Medical Illustration." Works drawn from all of the library's research centers, augmented by items on loan from the New York Academy of Medicine and other collections, ranging from medieval renderings of the universe to the first photograph of the moon; through 2/19/00. . . . "Sight/Insight: Visual Commentaries on the Physical World." Prints, portfolios, and illustrated books by contemporary artists who have drawn inspiration from the natural and physical sciences; through 1/8/00. . . . "Berenice Abbott: Science Photographs." Science-themed prints by the photographer; through 1/8/00. . . . "Adventures in Science and Exploration." Humorous drawings by Charles Addams of perilous and bizarre discoveries by scientists and explorers; through 1/29/00. . . . "In Company: Robert Creeley's Collaborations." Books and projects by the poet made in collaboration with artists Georg Baselitz, Francesco Clemente, Alex Katz, Susan Rothenberg, and others; through 1/15/00. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues. and Wed. 11–7:30, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"The Italians in New York: Five Centuries of Struggle and Achievement." Clothing, objects, letters, photographs, and other materials documenting the lives of Italians in New York; through 2/20/00. . . . "$24: The Legendary Deal for Manhattan." An exhibition investigating the infamous purchase of Manhattan, through paintings, Dutch and Native American artifacts, maps, and other sources; through 3/9/00. . . . "Putting It on Paper: Two Centuries of American Drawings and Watercolors From the Collection of the the New-York Historical Society." Works by Audubon, Catlin, Cole, Mount, and other American artists; through 1/2/00. 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center—"Rudy Burckhardt: A View From Astoria." Photographs of Queens and Manhattan by the late Swiss artist; through 1/2/00. . . . "Children of Berlin: Cultural Developments 1989–1999." An exhibition featuring works by artists, art-based associations and publications, new-media pioneers, architects, fashion designers, club-life promoters, and others who make up Berlin's cultural milieu; through 1/2/00. . . . "Minimalia: An Italian Vision in 20th-Century Art." An exhibition exploring simplification and reduction in twentieth-century Italian art as seen in the works of Giacomo Balla, Francesco Clemente, Lucio Fontana, Michelangelo Pistoletto, and others; through 1/2/00. . . . "Sol LeWitt: Concrete Block." An exhibit mapping the artist's art-making process from preliminary drawings to wooden models to completed outdoor cinderblock sculptures; through 1/2/00. . . . "On Your Own Time." Works by artists who explore the passing of time, among them Teresita Fernández, Ceal Floyer, Sabrina Mezzaqui, Roman Opalka, and Lawrence Weiner; through 1/2/00. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $5 suggested donation.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol.*" A holiday presentation of the original manuscript of *A Christmas Carol*, one of the library's greatest treasures; through 1/9/00. . . . "The Great Experiment: George Washington and the American Republic." A selection of Washington's books, manuscripts, maps, broadsides, works of art, and personal effects, drawn primarily from the collections of the Huntington Library in San Marino, California; the Morgan Library and the Gilder Lehrman Collection; through 1/9/00. . . . "Pierpont Morgan: Banker and Collector." An exhibition on the life and times of the turn-of-the-century financier, whose collection formed the basis of the Morgan Library; through 1/16/00. . . . "Audubon and the Artist-Naturalist Tradition in America." Rarely seen drawings and published volumes by John James Audubon, as well as a group of the artist's letters; through 1/30/00. 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.–Thurs. 10:30–5, Fri. 10–8, Sat. 10:30–6;

Sun. 12–6; $7, $5 students and seniors.

Queens Museum of Art—"Modern Odysseys: Greek American Artists of the Twentieth Century." The first museum exhibition to survey the contributions of Greek-Americans to modern and contemporary art, including works by Stephen Antonakis, William Baziotes, Linda Benglis, Lucas Samaras, Theodoros Stamos, and others; through 1/30/00. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian—"Instrument of Change: Jim Schoppert Retrospective Exhibition, 1947–1992." Carved panels, sculptures, paintings, and poetry by the Tlingit artist; through 2/6/00. 1 Bowling Green (212-514-3712), 10–5 daily; free.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Passages: Contemporary Art in Transition." Installations, paintings, sculptures, photographs, prints, and mixed-media works by sixteen contemporary artists who have participated in the museum's Artists-in-Residence program over the last three decades; through 1/17/00. 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500), Wed., Thurs, Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"The American Century: Art & Culture 1900–2000." Part two of a survey of American art and culture as seen through more than 500 works of painting, sculpture, photography, installation, film, video, and related historical and cultural materials covering the years 1950 to 2000 drawn from the museum's permanent collection and from private collections and public institutions around the world; through 2/13/00. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8 (pay what you wish 6–8 on the first Thurs. of every month); $12.50, $10.50 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more. Timed tickets may be purchased in advance for a $2 service charge by calling 877-WHITNEY or ordering online at www.whitney.org.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Fred Tomaselli: Gravity's Rainbow." A site-specific wall piece that incorporates the artist's trademark pills, hemp leaves, and photographic cutouts; through 1/7/00. . . . "Lee Boroson: Underpass." A large-scale sculpture made from translucent blue and white fabric, suspended from the ceiling of the Philip Morris Sculpture Court; through 3/17/00. 120 Park Ave. (212-878-2550), Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. 11–7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's—20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000). 12/8 at 10 and 2: "Important Jewelry." On view from 12/3. 12/9 at 10 and 2: "Antiquities." On view from 12/4. 12/9 at 6: "Ancient Jewelry." On view from 12/4. 12/10 at 10 and 2: "Printed Books and Manuscripts." On view from 12/4. 12/16 at 10 and 2: "Rugs." On view from 12/4.

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (212-606-0430). 12/8 at 10: "Twentieth-Century Decorative Arts." On view from 12/4. 12/9 at10 and 2: "Jewelry." On view from 12/4. 12/14 at10 and 2: "European Decorative Arts." On view from 12/10.

Doyle—175 E. 87th St. (212-427-2730). 12/8 and 12/9 at 10: "Jewelry, Watches, Silverware, and Coins." On view from 12/4. 12/15 at 10: "Fine Furniture, Decorations, and Paintings." On view from 12/11.

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000). 12/8 at 10:15 and 2: "Arcade Jewelry." On view from 12/2. 12/8 at 6 and 12/9 at 10:15 and 2: "Treasure from the SS Central America." 12/9 at 6:30 and 12/10 at 10:15 and 2: "Antiquities." On view from 12/5. 12/14 at 10:15 and 2: "Coins." On view from 12/10.

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710). 12/9 at 10:30: "Photographic Literature Photographs." On view from 12/4. 12/10 at 10:30: "Cameras and Viewing Devices." On view from 12/4.

Love Needs No Pedigree

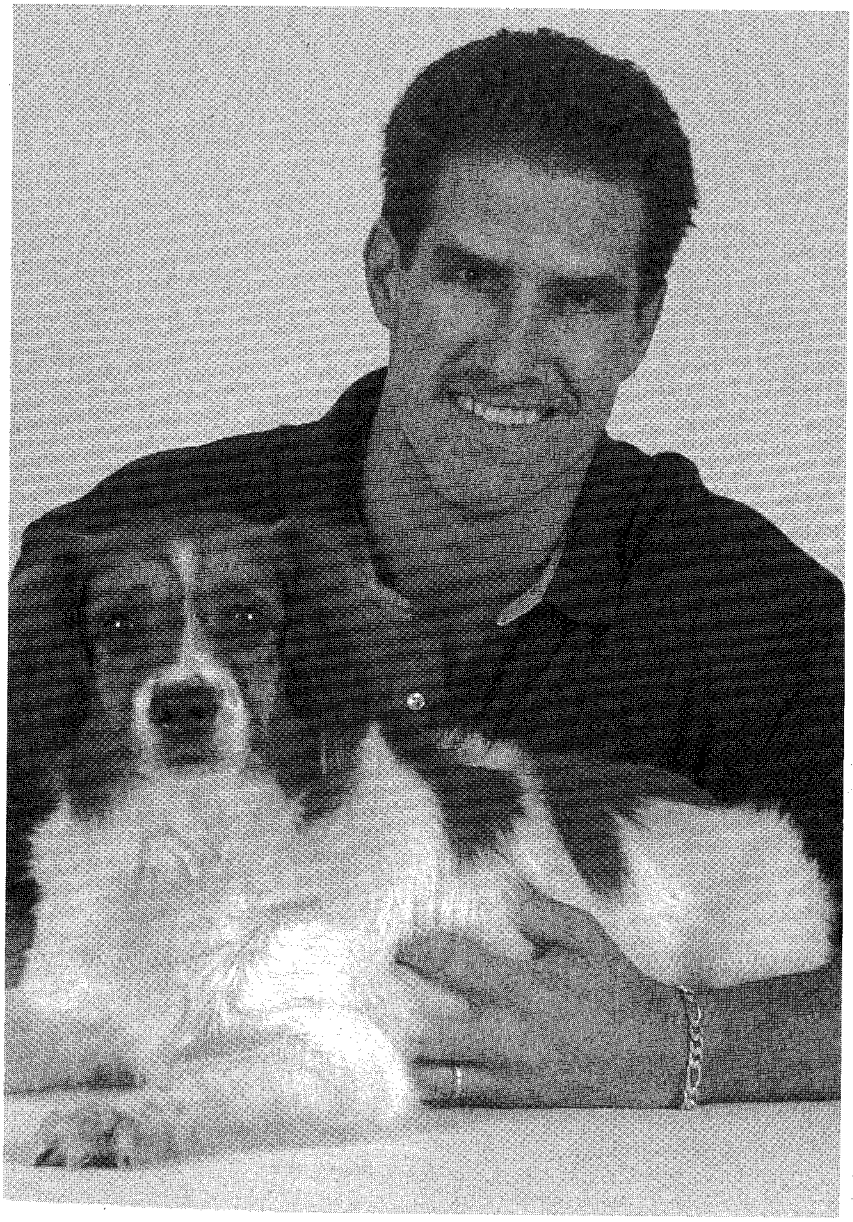


Photo by Mary Bloom

New York Yankees star Paul O'Neill with 6 year old Sassie.

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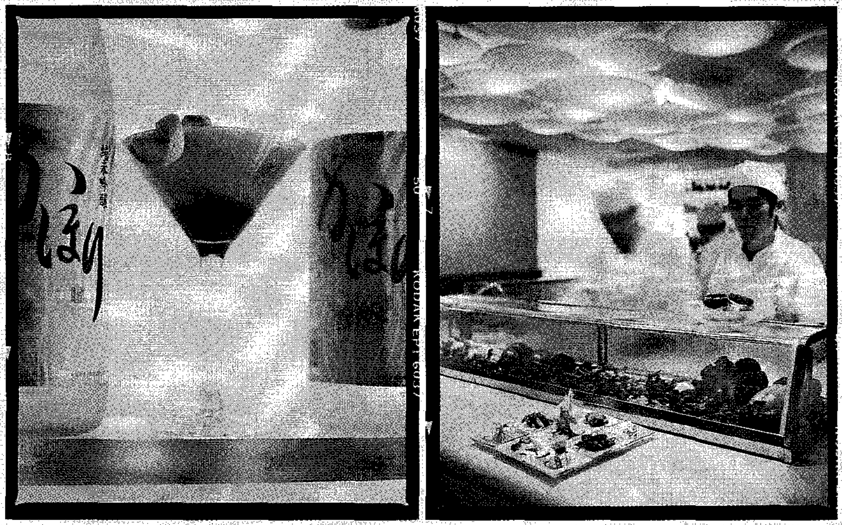
restaurants

Speaking Frankly...Leshko's...Sweetmeat

Opening
Ja-pan Latino

The notion of enlivening Japanese food with Peruvian flavors isn't new—in fact, it helped make Nobu Matsuhisa famous—but this week the concept finds a new champion in Eiji Takase, chef at Gramercy Park newcomer Sushi Samba. The Japanese native, who's worked at Iso, Match, and Fujiyama Mama, flew to Peru to dabble in fiery aji chilies, seviches, and anticuchos, which all appear on his exciting hybrid menu. In addition to a dramatic sushi-seviche bar, there's a bicultural drink list, a South American soundtrack, and house specialties called sambas, which marry Japanese and Latino flavors in dishes like roasted duck with pisco soy, and green-tea noodles with habanero garlic oil. (245 Park Avenue South, near 20th Street; 212-475-9377.)



Manhattan

Lower New York

Alison on Dominick—An impeccably turned-out room with blue banquettes and tender lighting. Perfectionist owner Alison Becker Hurt makes sure that all is well. *38 Dominick St., nr. Hudson St. (212-727-1188). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (212-406-2292). (I) ($).*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Cub Room—Fighting back from the scorching bar scene his restaurant became last summer, chef-owner Henry Meer (from Lutèce)—doing penance for the butter and cream of the past—is dishing up contemporary American fare to an impossibly diverse crowd. Yes, that was Ethan Hawke. *131 Sullivan St., at Prince St. (212-677-4100). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Ecco—A beacon in the wilderness that is Chambers Street. Old-world charm and an excellent seasonal antipasto offering. The very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. *124 Chambers St., nr. Sixth Ave. (212-227-7074). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gigino Trattoria—The rustic Italian fare in this barnlike TriBeCa trattoria ranges from brick-oven pizza and calzones to salmon with broccoli rabe. The casual atmosphere and fresh, inventive peasant food have already gained a loyal neighborhood following. *323 Greenwich St. (212-431-1112). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Hudson River Club—From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. But your attention may very well be diverted by the eye-catching American food—seafood sausage with stewed white beans, potato-and-truffle ravioli with saffron cream, seared yellowfin tuna with caramelized foie gras—right in front of you. *4 World Financial Ctr. (212-786-1500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

The Independent—From the minute it opened, this tavernesque TriBeCa duplex has been a favorite of the fashionable neighborhood. The creative bistro menu includes cornmeal-coated calamari with green-chile tartar sauce, shiitake-seared salmon with cashew-scallion rice cake, and slow-roasted duck with blood-orange sauce. *179 W. Broadway (212-219-2010). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (212-228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

L'Ecole—This modern French bistro is unique in that its chefs are students from the French Culinary Institute. Special prix fixe menus are available, so come with either an empty stomach or a doggie bag. Private parties. Closed Sundays. *462 Broadway, at Grand St. (212-219-3300). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Layla—A Middle Eastern feast, complete with gyrating belly dancer, brought to you by Drew Nieporent and his TriBeCa production team. Menu highlights include crabmeat phyllo, cinnamon-braised lamb shank with okra, and toasted couscous and almond ice milk. *211 W. Broadway, at Franklin St. (212-431-0700). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (212-219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has conquered TriBeCa. It's still virtually impossible to get a reservation, but the intrepid hordes can wait for a table to open up two doors down at Next Door Nobu. *105 Hudson St. (212-219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (212-233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (212-274-8883). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Provence—Lots of people have got engaged in the charming garden at this authentic country French restaurant; even more have sampled the bourride, bouillabaisse, and bass flambé. If you can't actually make it to the Côte d'Azur, this is the next best thing. *38 MacDougal St. (212-475-7500). (M–E) AE.*

Raoul's—The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming

Photographs by Joe Scafuro.

ASK GAEL

Is it true "nobody" goes to Le Cirque anymore?

Think again. Granted, you'll be vying with 'burban matrons and rubberneckers from the Middle West if you try to book a table. I give up being anonymous when the listed line rings busy for 95 minutes, knowing that host Sirio Maccioni (above) can never say no to a regular. "So come," he says. "We only have 500 already tonight." It's Saturday, the supposed no-one-who's-anyone-goes-out night, yet the red room is lined, if not lurid, with affluent New Yorkers, strictly 10021ers. Either my eyes need a laser adjustment, or the space I once found "too gypsy caravan" has actually mellowed. Of course we are getting truffled right and left, but I think I'm still sufficiently sane to judge the elegant signature scallops "in black tie," tonight's luscious bouillabaisse, a superlative veal chop, and crusty pig's foot on mashed potatoes. Pierre Schaedelin, a veteran of Michelin three-star Auberge de l'Ill, has joined chef Sottha Khunn, reviving a few old Escoffier tricks such as a vol-au-vent of cockscomb (terrifying as much for its oodles of cream as for its odd rooster parts) and quenelle de brochet (light as air but shy of salt) in a lush and antediluvian Nantua sauce. And here's one for the Underground Gourmet . . . the 45-minute, three-course $25 lunch in the bar-lounge offers soup, a choice of five entrées, and crème brûlée. (455 Madison Avenue, at 50th Street; 212-303-7788.)

sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (212-966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Salaam Bombay—A far cry from the curry canteens of 6th Street, this Indian restaurant is a good alternative to TriBeCa's medley of French and Italian standbys. Marble floors and a canopy above each table decorate the dining room. Regional specialties from all corners of the country include dahi batata poori from Bombay, khaman dhokla from Gujarat, and lamb pasanda from Kashmir. *317 Greenwich St. (212-226-9400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Shanghai Tang in SoHo—After opening to critical and popular acclaim in Flushing, this Shanghai-Japanese hybrid is braving the fickle SoHo dining public. When you tire of yellow eel, blue crab, or the renowned soup dumplings, there's always the sushi bar. *77 W. Houston St. (212-614-9550). (I–M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Sosa Borella—This full-service TriBeCa café is just as good for an afternoon espresso as for a full meal, not to mention the weekly tango lessons. Sandwiches come nearly two dozen ways; the Italian-Argentinean menu features entrées like Milanese steak and short ribs of beef. *460 Greenwich St. (212-431-5093). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—This 1807 landmark farmhouse is known for its huge portions of barbecued and smoked chicken and ribs, and has added a steak menu with prices starting at $14.95. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for a $14.95 all-you-can-eat on Monday and Tuesday night. Kids' menu available. *143 Spring St. (212-431-3993). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (212-941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef and TV personality Michael Lomonaco supervises the kitchens of this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including stout-braised Black Angus short ribs with Maytag blue cheese, and lobster potpie with truffle cream, spinach

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

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leaves, and a chive biscuit. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's 60,000-bottle wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 75-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune, even while they maneuver all three courses in the prix fixe, which starts at $24. Late-night dining, too. *13 E. 12th St. (212-741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from the 6th Street strip, for its food as much as its upscale décor. Possibly the only East Village restaurant with an *intentionally* shattered windowpane. *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (212-982-0533). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Knickerbocker Bar and Grill—A subdued steakhouse with vintage items on the walls—Hirschfelds, copies of the *Saturday Evening Post*, and nineteenth-century curios. A sophisticated combination of gastronomics and history. *33 University Pl., at E. 9th St. (212-228-8490). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—One of the earliest pioneers on the East Village dining scene, this comfortable Mexican cantina is especially welcoming in warm weather, when the garden is a serene urban oasis. The grilled-vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (212-254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (212-645-4525). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Opening
Avenue A List

This weekend, the Eastern European–inflected corner coffee shop that used to be Leshko's will reopen as a drastically different Leshko's: joyous news for anti-chain East Villagers who'd heard that Starbucks and Orange Julius were horning in on the space. The new owners enlisted the design team responsible for Moomba and Veruka, and hired chef Bruce Barnes (formerly of Universal Grill) to concoct an updated American menu that gets increasingly fancier as the day progresses, from corned-beef hash and eggs at breakfast to steamed mussels in a Pernod chili broth at dinner. Despite the stylish incursion of Knoll chairs, Danish-modern lamps, a retro cocktail menu, and a smoking room, a few vestigial victuals (like pierogi and kielbasa) remain in residence. (111 Avenue A; 212-777-2111.)

Below 14th Street, West

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (212-982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; French doors open out onto warm evenings. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (212-645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

One if by Land, Two if by Sea—An elegant Village restaurant situated within an eighteenth-century carriage house previously owned by Aaron Burr. Four fireplaces and nightly piano music enhance a fine menu of American specialties like beef Wellington. *17 Barrow St. (212-228-0822). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Osteria Fiorentina—Live piano and violin music lend this casual Italian restaurant that old-time Village ambience. The menu offers standards like risotti, zuppa di clams, and veal chops. *281 Bleecker St. (212-633-2941). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot owned by Aureole chef Charlie Palmer, but Josh Capon's food is all very twentieth-century: potato-wrapped cod with citrus glaze, charred sirloin with red-onion marmalade, foie gras parfait with roasted apple chutney. *36 E. 22nd St. (212-228-4399). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bambou—There's a hint of the tropics on East 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like crab cakes with avocado and molasses or eggplant soup with coconut and curry. The relaxing, palm-fronded dining room and bar attract the expected boldface names and beautiful faces. *243 E. 14th St. (212-358-0012). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. We *love* the white-peach sangría. *23 E. 22nd St. (212-228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (212-460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with chipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (212-679-6812). (M) MC, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American standout doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (212-477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (212-481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak-frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (212-679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (212-807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (212-677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered this Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientele were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselves at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been (for the most part) repaired, and the regulars are taking their places at the counter. Famous for its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection, and comprehensive seafood preparations, the restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourists alike. *Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (212-490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

Patria—Zesty Latin American fare brought to you in a festive high-energy atmosphere. The three-story dining room suits the changing mood of diners: bright and airy by day and warm and earthy by night. Try the Mojito, Patria's signature drink made from sugarcane. *250 Park Ave. So., nr. 20th St. (212-777-6211). (M) AE, MC, V.*

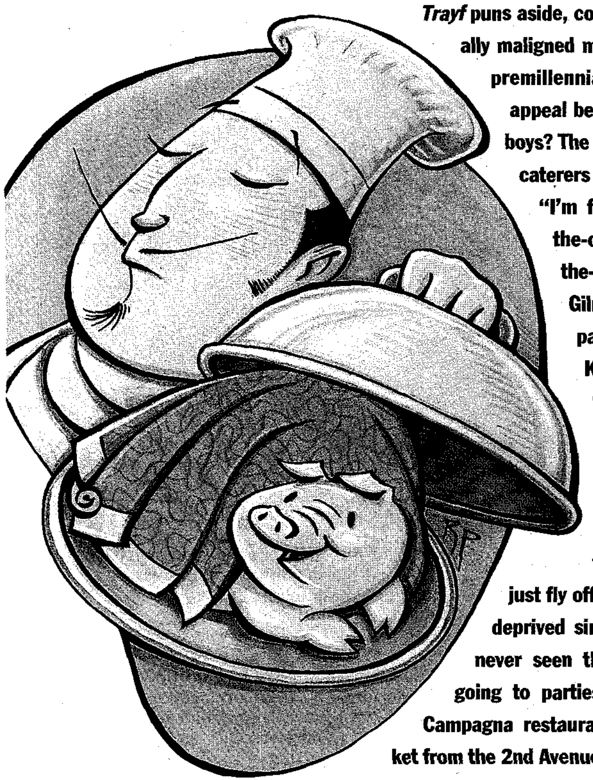
Rossini's—This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and private

Photograph by Warren Salowe.

Comeback

This Little Kosher Frank Went to Market

Last month, Hebrew National, the kosher-hot-dog-maker founded on the Lower East Side and now based in the Bronx, started thinking small. For the first time in the company's 95-year history, it shrank its frankfurters down to bite-size morsels, wrapped them in puff pastry, and sent them off to infiltrate the frozen-food section as kosher Beef Franks in a Blanket. So, what took so long? "Well, we kind of fooled with it from time to time," says Hebrew National's Martin Silver, "but this time we decided to go whole hog." (Such talk from a kosher-meat man!) *Trayf* puns aside, could this be a sign that the perennially maligned mini-wiener, in some sort of bizzaro premillennial reversal, has broadened its appeal beyond bridegrooms and bar mitzvah boys? The answer, according to some upscale caterers who wish it were otherwise, is yes. "I'm finding that you have this end-of-the-century, retro, I-want-my-pigs-in-the-blanket thing going on," says Jon Gilman, whose company, Taste, caters parties for Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, and Cartier among others. "At first, we were resistant because it's not exactly our style"—a style that tends toward visually striking arrangements of Moroccan- and Asian-inspired food—"but we've found that they just fly off the tray. It's like people have been deprived since they were kids, like they have never seen them before." Not if they've been going to parties catered by Mark Strausman of Campagna restaurant, who serves franks-in-the-blanket from the 2nd Avenue Deli. "People love them," he says. "It's this whole thing of going back to the past." Most chefs and caterers, though, are in a state of weenie denial and would still rather create something fresh than indulge a client's atavistic urges. "We never do them," says Jo-Ann Makovitzky, co-owner with her husband, Marco Moreira, of the superb Marco Polo Café and Caterers. Never? That's pretty strong. "We *rarely* do them," she concedes. "Sometimes we do them for kids, but never for adults. Well, we'll do them for the kids, and then the adults want to eat them." And how does that make you feel? "I mean, they're good; I mean, it doesn't take our years of culinary experience to prepare them. . . . Okay, definitely people love them—there's never one left at a party." As with Hebrew National, they answer to a higher authority—popular demand. **Rob Patronite**



parties are easily accommodated. *108 E. 38th St. (212-683-0135). (E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Verbena—Diane Forley's seasonal American cuisine is at once delicate and deliciously satisfying; the room, similarly, pulls off the neat trick of feeling luxurious and minimalist at the same time. The menu is whimsically divided into two categories—fruits and vegetables, and fish, birds, and meats—with such appealing entries as butternut squash ravioli with roasted orange sauce, and rack of lamb with Yorkshire pudding. In summer, demand a garden table. *54 Irving Pl. (212-260-5454). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Armani Café—Take a break from dressing-room calisthenics at this sleek coffee-and-panini bar—or at one of the outdoor tables, in season—where the Italian-accented salads, sandwiches and soups change daily. *110 Fifth Ave., at 16th St. (212-727-3251). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Ben's Kosher Delicatessen—This casual delicatessen—the Art Deco–ish Manhattan offshoot of a Long Island chain—brings a full roster of pastrami, corned beef, sour pickles, potato latkes, and other highlights of kosher cooking to the garment district. All baking is done on the premises, and for those who hanker for something a little stronger than Dr. Brown's, there's a full bar. *209 W. 38th St. (212-398-2367). (I) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (212-243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Caffe Bondi Ristorante—Popular with the photographers who work in the Flatiron district and foodies from all over who fill the garden in warm weather. Specializes in Sicilian dishes like coniglio

Illustration by Robert Piersanti.

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Chelsea Bistro & Bar—This friendly bistro became a neighborhood hangout virtually the day it opened. Try the delicious hanger steak and lamb shank, and experiment among the 200-odd wines on the well-chosen list. *358 W. 23rd St. (212-727-2026). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (212-989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Fusion@Ohm—One of the new crop of all-in-one entertainment centers: dinner, dancing, and the ever-popular lounging on velvet furniture. Plus an international fusion menu that features Vietnamese shrimp spring rolls, rigatoni bolognese, and pistachio-crusted chicken breast with morel sauce. *16 W. 22nd St. (212-229-2000). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Hush—This Flatiron venture is part bar, part nightclub, part restaurant. If you find that last part the most interesting, you'll appreciate chef John Tesar's New American menu, served in shareable portions. *17 W. 19th St. (212-989-4874). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Le Madri—This Chelsea mainstay has long enjoyed a reputation for informality and flavorful Italian fare. The garden is a wonderful warm-weather spot for a light lunch of salad and pasta or a more substantial repast like osso buco with gremolata or risotto with lemon and zucchini. *168 W. 18th St. (212-727-8022). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Windfall Lounge & Grill—What used to be the dining room of the Engineers Club has become a candlelit, oak-paneled American restaurant, outfitted with sofas, banquettes, and a turn-of-the-century oak bar. The eclectic menu offers salads, pastas, and entrées like crab-crusted salmon and Parmesan risotto with red-pepper coulis. *23 W. 39th St. (212-869-4606). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner, which could be a hearty serving of filet mignon or Chilean sea bass, topped off with cheesecake, our city's major contribution to the confectionery world. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten, during which time you'll dine and dance to the music of a live band. Jacket required. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (212-630-8100). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Caviar Russe—The owners of this caviar bar and boutique are also importers, which means that you're getting your Beluga—and golden Osetra, and Sevruga—right from the source. The petite restaurant ensconced in a midtown townhouse will gladly feed you a spoonful or a more substantial meal, like a foie gras sandwich with Armagnac-soaked figs, or steak tartare with baby-beet-and-black-truffle salad. Afternoon tea and prix fixe menus also available. *538 Madison Ave., nr. 54th St. (212-980-5908). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cucina & Co.—This market-style takeout shop and café is ideally situated in the lobby of the MetLife Building to catch the crush of commuters passing through Grand Central. Breakfast pastries, specialty sandwiches, baked pastas, steak-frites, and "Dinners for Two" keep the worker bees fueled throughout the day. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-682-2700). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Four Seasons—Philip Johnson designed this cathedral of modernity. Picasso did the tapestry. And the place remains a classic 30 years later. The Grill Room is where the term *power lunch* got its start in the seventies. The pool room is where the rest of us go for achingly expensive fare like foie gras and figs and chocolate velvet. *99 E. 52nd St. (212-754-9494). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Fresco—It's a family affair: The Scottos, including broadcasting star Rosanna, have created a room where you'll find stars at your feet and hearty portions of modern Tuscan fare (rich homemade pasta, thin and crispy grilled pizza, chops, and fish) on the table. *34 E. 52nd St. (212-935-3434). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Jimmy Sung's—This elegant midtown restaurant serves classic Hunan cuisine and a sampling of dishes from other regions—and, as demonstrated by its sushi bar, other countries. Private dining rooms are perfect for special occasions, business meetings, or mini-banquets. *219 E. 44th St. (212-682-5678). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Montebello—The staff at this cozy neighborhood restaurant offers a gracious welcome, while the kitchen provides upscale Northern Italian fare, especially affordable in the four-course pretheater menu. Specialties include angel's-hair pasta with fresh tomato and basil, and shrimp sautéed with cognac, broccoli, and red peppers. Private party room available. *120 E. 56th St. (212-753-1447). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Naples 45 Ristorante e Pizzeria—This new, sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Peacock Alley—Under talented chef Laurent Gras, the Waldorf's posh dining room has become reinvigorated. Known for his long association with French national hero Alain Ducasse, Gras has a special touch with foie gras and handles seasonal American ingredients with a classical Gallic touch. This is one of midtown's secret pleasures. Jackets required; harpist performs nightly. *301 Park Ave., in the Waldorf-Astoria (212-872-4895). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Pig 'n' Whistle on 3rd—There's plenty of convivial Irish-pub-style cheer in this East Side spinoff of a popular midtown haunt. The basic American menu offers staples like shepherd's pie, blackened rib eye, chicken potpie, barbecued ribs, and onion loaf. *922 Third Ave., nr. 55th St. (212-688-4646). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (212-867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking with dinner after 5 P.M. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (212-246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is devoted entirely to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (212-581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

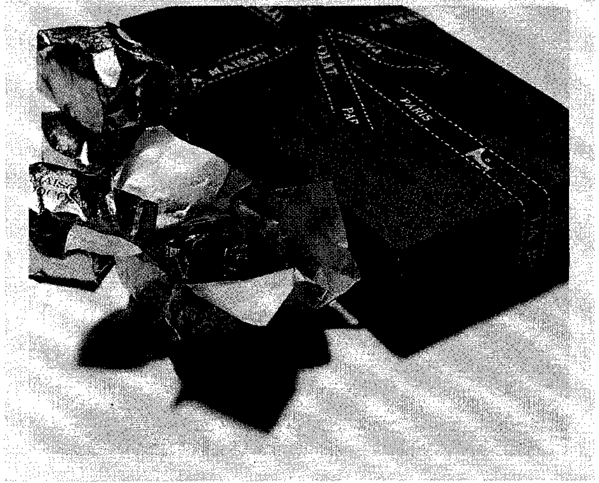
Bombay Palace—This newly refurbished, elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent selection of Indian breads. *30 W. 52nd St. (212-541-7777). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Broadway Joe Steakhouse—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAs while you dine. Discount dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (212-246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Caffe Cielo—This comfortable theater district restaurant is named for the sky, visible not through a skylight in the ceiling but as a mural of one. The menu covers the familiar northern Italian territory of antipasto, salads, pastas, and grilled fish and meat. *881 Eighth Ave., nr. 53rd St. (212-246-9555). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Shopping

What does late fall smell like? Chestnuts roasting, either on an open fire or, here in New York, on a street cart along Fifth Avenue. But it tastes like something else entirely: those sugar-coated, sugar-steeped candied chestnuts from France called marrons glacés. Are they nuts or sweets? Both, clearly, after 48 hours of immersion in vanilla-sugar syrup, when they develop a lush, almost fudgy consistency and a deep, evocative flavor with just the vaguest, inexplicable hint of brandy. Available at La Maison du Chocolat; $38 for a box of 10, $52 for 14, or $79 for 21. [1018 Madison Avenue, near 79th Street; 800-988-5632.]



Photograph by Amy Freeth.

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place. Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (212-956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Johnnie's—This small, old-world Italian restaurant has been a midtown fixture for over three and a half decades. The menu runs the gamut from basic pastas to chicken, veal, and seafood dishes; the $14.95 dinner special is a particularly good deal. *135 W. 45th St. (212-869-5565). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Les Pyrenées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (212-246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Michael's—This California transplant has lasted a decade in Manhattan by offering seasonal, creative American cooking, like spring-pea gnocchi with pecorino Romano and summer truffles, in a comfortable, modern-art-filled environment. Now that the glass walls in the garden room swing open, dining out back is nearly alfresco. *24 W. 55th St. (212-767-0555). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rio de Janeiro—Meat is back in a big way at this churrascaria rodizio, where eighteen different cuts of beef are barbecued over a charcoal pit and served nonstop, until you say uncle. Live Brazilian music Wednesday through Sunday; prix fixe menus available. *127 W. 43rd St. (212-575-0808). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Sitar Indian Cuisine—This casual restaurant attracts office workers and midtown's ever-growing hordes of tourists, who come for house specialties like ginger chicken, lamb shaslik, onion bhajia, and the always-popular chicken tikka masala. *58 W. 56th St. (212-581-1155). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Tapika—Chef David Walzog's spicy cooking has transformed a formerly subdued space into a lively canteen with his version of haute Southwestern. Try the black-bean purée with chorizo and garlic flatbread or the grilled rabbit loin with cilantro oil and habanero sauce. The bar has its own snack menu and a super selection of microbrews and tequilas. *950 Eighth Ave., at 56th St. (212-397-3737). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain Restaurant & Saloon—The midtown offshoot of a SoHo rib joint, this much larger duplex restaurant serves an extensive southern barbecue menu, which is also available for on-and-off-premises catering. Steaks have been added, starting at $14.95. *121 W. 45th St. (212-869-4545). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Armani Café—This stylish midtown haven for weary shoppers (and informed eaters) on the sixth floor and rooftop terrace of the clothing store offers wonderfully fresh salads, al dente pastas, delicious sandwiches, and entrée specials like grilled salmon garnished with farro and cucumber-fennel-chive salad. *601 Madison Ave., nr. 57th St. (212-715-0500). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (212-758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (212-371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (212-753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (212-265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Campagnola—This comfortable Italian spot has been a neighborhood favorite for over a dozen years, thanks in part to host Salvatore's warm welcome. Of course, the flavorful country-style food—Italian bouillabaisse with lobster, double-cut veal chops with wild mushrooms, antipasto—is equally endearing. *1382 First Ave., at 74th St. (212-861-1102). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (212-996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Fireman's of Brooklyn—The man behind midtown's nostalgic Brooklyn Diner expands on his outer-borough fantasy with this seafood house, which features a shrimp, oyster, and chowder bar; market-fresh fish; and landlubber options like filet mignon and "Bubba Fireman's chicken." *1081 Third Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-838-7570). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Jo Jo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. *160 E. 64th St. (212-223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Mark's—Decked out like an English library, with plump, tasseled pillows to nest against. Fine East-West cooking and first-rate desserts. *25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (212-879-1864). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (212-644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *1596 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (212-585-3838). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (212-935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (212-861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sel & Poivre—Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes specialties like steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. *853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-517-5780). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (212-877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (212-864-7326). (I) ($).*

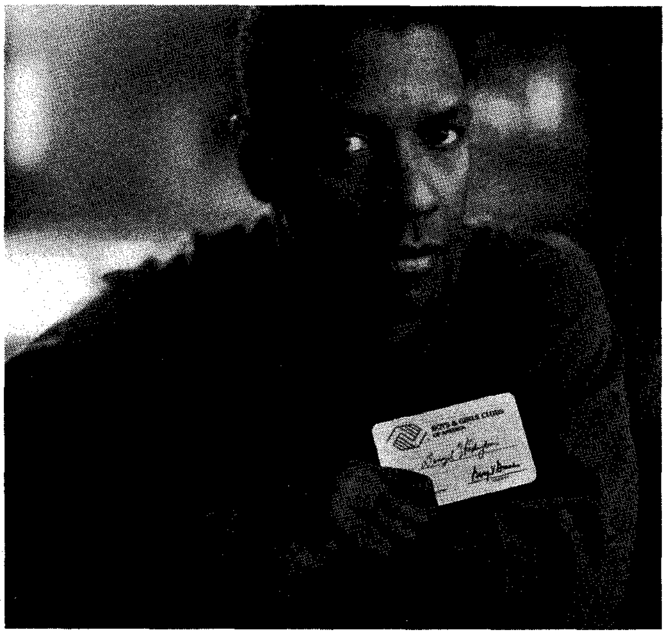
Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (212-769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-

Opening
Meet the Missus

Construction-company owner Joe Regele met his wife, Elizabeth, seven years ago when she was tending bar in Colorado, and somehow he persuaded her to break the sacred never-date-a-customer rule. "I had more persistence than the other guys," he says. Now he's also got a crackerjack bartender for Park Bar, a cozy neighborhood pub the couple (and partner Pat Patterson) have opened just west of Union Square. A big fan of the Old Town tavern, Regele aimed for some of its low-key charm with atmospheric touches like an antique bar, a tin ceiling, mosaic tiles, and a limited menu of hearty bar food (chicken pot pie, Welsh rarebit, panini) supplied by next-door neighbor Marco Polo Café. (15 East 15th Street; 212-367-9085.)

Photograph by Magdalena Caris.



Denzel Washington

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chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (212-724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the $29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. And now, lunch is served Tuesday through Friday. *222 W. 79th St. (212-799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sapphire Indian Cuisine—A couple of partners from TriBeCa's Salaam Bombay have brought regional Indian cuisine to Columbus Circle, an area in sore need of a tandoori infusion. The prix fixe lunch buffet is a bargain, and all the currently trendy territories (Goa, Gujarat) are well-represented. *1845 Broadway, nr. 61st St. (212-245-4444). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouthwatering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Wells—A talked-about chicken-and-waffle combination. One way or another, this restaurant has been a neighborhood mainstay for nearly 60 years. *2247 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., at 132nd St. (212-234-0700). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Casa Pepe—Mexican and Spanish fare meld in this elegant restaurant, with garden dining in fine weather and a fireplace to warm up the gray days of winter. The seafood-heavy menu finds best expression in the zarzuela de mariscos, the paella marinera, and the tacos Vera Cruz. *114 Bay Ridge Ave. (718-833-8865). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Peter Luger—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Two Tom's—Firehouse-kitchen ambience and a waiter who tells you what you want to eat. The double-rib pork chops are peerless, and the escarole is great, too, but refuse the mercilessly overcooked pasta when it's offered. Eat early during the week and call ahead on weekends. Regular private parties make getting a table frustrating, but it's always worth the trouble. *255 Third Ave., nr. Union St. (718-875-8689). (I) ($).*

Queens

Elias Corner—Mix with the locals in Astoria as they queue up for a table at this Greek fish tavern. Don't wait for a menu; it won't come. Instead, eyeball the counter as you enter. If the offerings look like today's catch, they are. The owner fetches the fish each morning. Opt for the deep-fried, pinky-size bait fish over the squid. *24–01 31st St., at Astoria Blvd. (718-932-1510). (M) ($).*

Water's Edge—Every table has a view of Manhattan. A quiet and elegant space to partake of fancy American fare like roasted-chestnut soup and red snapper poached in orange-saffron infusion with baby fennel and chervil. Jacket required. *44th Dr. at the East River (718-482-0033). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to this charming bistro and garden that serves inventive, bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis on handpicked fresh seafood. *1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

in concert

Kazuo Ohno...Vienna Choir Boys...David Roussève

Classical Music

Completely Copland—Marin Alsop conducts *Quiet City, Connotations,* and others, 12/7 at 7:30 and 12/9 at 8. Andrew Litton conducts Symphonies No. 1 and 3, and *Old American Songs* with mezzo Marilyn Horne. 12/10 and 12/11 at 8. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $18–$77.*

Golub-Kaplan-Carr Trio—Works by Haydn, Fauré, Brahms, and Nicholas Maw, with soprano Ying Huang, 12/7 at 7:30. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-875-5788); $25–$35.*

Louis Louis—French Baroque chamber music by Couperin, 12/7 at 5:30. *St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University (212-795-9094); free.*

Chopin and the Irish—Pianist Jeffrey Siegel plays Chopin, Mendelssohn, John Field, and Percy Grainger, 12/8 at 8. *92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $25.*

ARTEK Ensemble—Seventeenth-century Christmas music, 12/9 at 8. *St. Francis of Assisi Church, 135 W. 31st St. (212-967-9157); $20.*

Bargemusic—Works by Mozart, Bach, and Dvořák, 12/9 at 7:30, 12/12 at 4. *Fulton Ferry Landing, under the Brooklyn Bridge (718-624-2083); $23.*

Messiah—Handel's oratorio—fully staged, 12/9–12/11 at 7:30, 12/12 at 5:30. *John Jay College Theater, 899 Tenth Ave., at 59th St. (212-307-4100); $45.*

Michael Kimmelman, Piano—Bach's Partita No. 1 in B-flat, 12/9 at 7. *Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-570-3949); $20.*

Christmas Revels—Clown Geoff Hoyle leads a medieval musical Christmas celebration, 12/10 at 8, 12/11 at 2 and 8, 12/12 at 2 and 6. *Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, bet. 94th and 95th Sts. (212-864-5400); $17–$33.*

The New York Pops—Skitch Henderson and the Abyssinian Baptist Church Choir, 12/10 and 12/11 at 8. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $18–$66.*

The Guarneri String Quartet—Works by Haydn and Mendelssohn, 12/11 at 8. *Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-570-3949); $30.*

Yakov Kasman, Piano—Works by Schumann, Prokofiev, Haydn, Medtner, and Stravinsky, 12/11 at 8. *92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $20.*

Douglas Riva, Piano—Works by Albénia, Granados, and Turina, 12/12 at 8:30. *Weill Recital Hall, 154 W. 57th St. (212-247-7800); $15–$20.*

Vienna Choir Boys— Lucio Golino conducts contemporary Austrian works and old Christmas favorites, 12/12 at 7:30. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $16–$56.*

A Joyous Christmas Concert—Betty Buckley, Victor Garber, Julie Harris, and Cherry Jones join the St. Bartholomew's Choristers and Chamber Orchestra in a program written by Terrence McNally, 12/13 and 12/14 at 7:30. *St. Bartholomew's Church, 109 E. 50th St. (212-378-0248); $35–$150.*

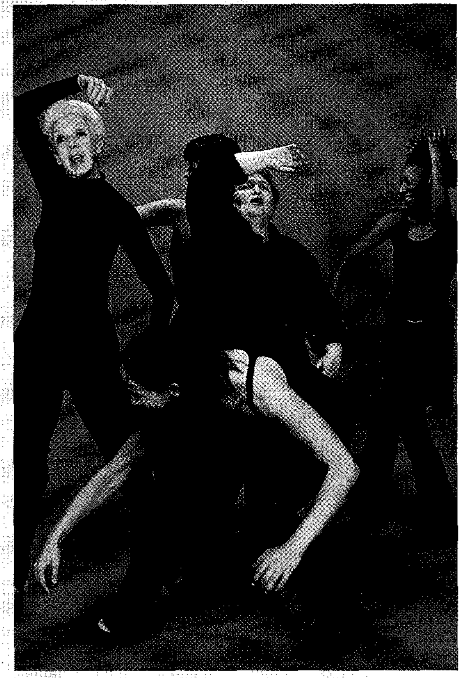
Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Previews

Truth or Dare

Cued by the title of David Gordon's new dance-theater piece ***Autobiography of a Liar***, you can believe in its portrait of a young-through-middle-aged artist and family man to the extent you choose. For instance, the "wife and muse" character, played by Valda Setterfield (pictured, left), Gordon's wife and muse, declares, "I love you." The David character (*not* played by Gordon) responds, "Easy for you to say it when I write it." Still, even in the flux of an early rehearsal, the work seems a credible answer to the question "*Then* what happened?"—a refrain in one of its segments. Gordon, who was in at the birth of postmodern dance in the sixties, is an original who has been persistently true to himself. His trademarks are a meltdown of the boundary between the theater of movement and the theater of words, an ironic wit, an unexpected romantic streak, and, above all, an ingenious subversiveness. For instance, despite the lazy allure of Gordon's movement and speech in real life, the David character is played by a chunky, feisty woman. Gordon has rejected playing by the rules because he hates them, even if the failure to institutionalize his maverick talent has cost him his fair share of fame and fortune. (His nods of recognition, however, include two Obies and a Bessie.) Instead of maintaining a traditional company, Gordon functions on a pickup basis, with "old friends" and new recruits whom, as he puts it, he can learn to love. Instead of lugging repertory around on tour and inevitably recasting it with players who don't quite fit the roles, he recycles and refashions old material, infiltrating it into new productions. Each of these, *Liar* most overtly, embodies "the truth and consequences of what happened yesterday." (See "Dance.")



Tobi Tobias

Opera

Amato Opera—*Die Fledermaus,* 12/11 at 7:30 and 12/12 at 2:30. *319 Bowery (212-228-8200); $25.*

Metropolitan Opera—*Le Nozze di Figaro,* 12/7 and 12/10 at 8; *Lucia di Lammermoor,* 12/8 at 8 and 12/11 at 12:30; *L'Elisir d'Amore,* 11/9 and 12/13 at 8; *Tristan und Isolde,* 12/11 at 7. *Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (212-362-6000); $25–$225.*

Samuel Ramey—*A Date With the Devil,* 12/12 at 3. *Prudential Hall, New Jersey Performing Arts Center (888-466-5722); $12–$56.*

Dance

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater—Dances by Ronald K. Brown and Judith Jamison, and, of course, Ailey's *Revelations,* 12/7–12/10 at 8, 12/11 at 2 and 8, 12/12 at 3 and 7:30. Through 1/2/00. *City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212); $25–$60.*

Ballet Hispanico—New works from Roussève, Ruiz, and Miranda, 12/7–12/10 at 8, 12/11 at 2 and 8, 12/12 at 2 and 7:30. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (212-242-0800); $35.*

New York City Ballet—George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker,* 12/7–12/9 at 6, 12/10 at 8, 12/11 at 2 and 8, and 12/12 at 1 and 5. Through 1/2/00. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (212-307-4100); $15–$82.*

David Roussève/Reality—*Love Songs* tells the maudlin and gritty story of two African slaves in love, 12/8–12/11 at 7:30. *BAM Harvey Theater, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn (718-636-4100); $15–$40.*

David Gordon—*Autobiography of a Liar* blends life, dance, and half-truths, 12/9–12/12 at 8:30. Through 12/19. *St. Mark's Church, Second Ave. at 10th St. (212-674-8194); $20.*

Kazuo Ohno—The 93-year-old Butoh master's *Requiem for the 20th Century* bends gender and politics in a resolutely Japanese style, 12/9–12/11 at 8. *Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (212-752-3015); $35.*

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

nightlife

Keith David..."Sacred Music"...Boss Hog

Performance
Hog Wild

As husband-and-wife teams go, Boss Hog's Cristina Martinez (*pictured*) and Jon Spencer (*also of the Blues Explosion*) make a pretty debauched pair—they bludgeoned Ike and Tina Turner's *I Idolize You* on *Boss Hog.* On December 8 at the Bowery Ballroom, they'll roadtest songs from their upcoming album *Whiteout* (due Valentine's Day 2000)—presumably with better chemistry than Ike and Tina. (See "Small Stages.")

Photograph by John Dunne.

Concerts

B. B. King—12/11 at 8. *New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Newark (212-307-7171). $46, $38, $28.*

"Party at The End of Time: 1999 Live."—12/11–12/12 at 7:30. Featuring The Roots, Vernon Reid, PM Dawn, N'Dea Davenport, and more. 12/11 is sold out. *BAM Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave. Brooklyn (718-636-4100). $20, $30, $45.*

Trans-Siberian Orchestra—12/11 at 8. *Beacon Theatre, 2124 Broadway, at 75th St. (212-307-7171). $40, $30.*

Yes—12/7–12/9 at 8. *Beacon Theater, 2124 Broadway, at 75th St. (212-307-7171). $65, $45.*

Small Stages

Arlene Grocery— 12/7: Corky Freak; Punk Rock Karaoke. 12/8: Boilermakers; Tijuana Bibles. 12/9: Sean Altman; Lowdown Payment. 12/10: George Usher; Perforated Head. 12/11: Shimmerhead; Lesion; Ride the Mole. 12/12: The Mercinaries; Trailer Park 5; Liver Spots. 12/13: Kaz Silver; Mark Geary. *95 Stanton St. (212-358-1633). $.*

Bottom Line—12/7: Lina Koutrakos. 12/8: Guy Clark. 12/9: Paul Griffin and Friends with Ashford & Simpson, Isaac Hayes, Cissy Houston, Chuck Jackson, Ben E. King. 12/10: Rockapella. 12/11: Kim Richey; Shawn Mullins. 12/13: Don Byron Quartet. *15 W. 4th St. (212-228-7880).*

Bowery Ballroom—12/8: Boss Hog. 12/9: Marshall Crenshaw; Amy Rigby. 12/10: Arto Lindsay. 12/11: John Linnell; Continental Drifters. *6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).*

CBGB & OMFUG—12/7: Dopo Yume. 12/8: Keel Hall. 12/9: Wharton Tiers. *315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (212-982-4052). $.*

Fez—Sundays: Kiki and Herb: "Have Another." Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—12/7: Squirrel Nut Zippers. 12/8: Jars of Clay. 12/10: Bob Mould. *17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).*

Joe's Pub—12/7: Cherry Frica Presents Pure Salsa. 12/9: Personality D.J. Series. 12/10: Lea DeLaria; D.J.'s Samantha & Shawn. 12/11: Lea DeLaria; Indie 5000. 12/12: Lea DeLaria *425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).*

Knitting Factory—12/7: "Melvin Gibbs Series"; "Cycle Unity Cipher"; Efendi. 12/8: Chris Whitley; Pernice Brothers. 12/9: Chris Whitley; Pernice Brothers; Marty Ehrlich's Travellers Tales. 12/10–12/11: The Ex; Don Caballero; Marty Ehrlich's Travellers Tales. 12/12: Bardo Pond; Pelt; Poem Rocket; Marty Ehrlich's Travellers Tales. 12/13: Sola & Friends; Gotham Writers' Workshop; Kenny Wessel Quartet. *74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). $.*

Makor—12/9: Knitting Factory Uptown. 12/11: Groove: John Brown's Body & D.J. Logic. 12/12: Sam Yahel Trio. 12/13: Rumi: Fire of Love. *35 West 67 St. (212-601-1000).*

Mercury Lounge—12/7: Marcus Wolf; Brooks Hale. 12/8: El Vez: "The Christmas Show." 12/10: Eddie From Ohio; The Kennedy's. 12/11: Waco Brothers; Andrew Bird's Bowl of Fire. 12/13: Parise; Father Panic. *217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).*

Rodeo Bar—12/9 & 12/10: The Ex-Husbands. 12/11: Rockabilly Armageddon. 12/12: Deke Dickerson. *375 Third Ave. (212-683-6500).*

S.O.B.'s—Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 12/11: Ogans; Liquid Sky vs. Karnival! 12/13: The New Swing Sextet with Wayne Gorbea & Salsa Picante. *204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).*

Wetlands—Mondays: D.J. Logic. Tuesdays: Illuminati. Thursdays: Groove Collective. 12/7: KVHW. 12/11: Angus; Nymbus; Hatch. *161 Hudson St. (212-386-3600). $.*

Clubland

Alphabet Lounge— Saturdays: A great new house-music party called "School," with resident D.J.'s Melvin Moore, Neil Aline (of "BPM" and "Rendez-Vous"), and producer Matthias Heilbronn. *104 Avenue C (212-780-0202).*

Baby Jupiter—12/7: Clark Gayton; Angel Idealism. 12/8: David Bartell's Circuit Rider; D.J. Fondue; Unconscious Collective. 12/9: Faticus; Skol Patrol. 12/10: 10th Planet; Velcro Inc. 12/11: No Shadow Kick; Etro-Anime; 12/12: Excuse Me Do You Speak Hebrew? 12/13: Rick Shapiro. *170 Orchard St. (212-780-0287).*

Baktun—A small, way-way-west venue that's host to some of the city's most relaxed, unpretentious club nights. Thursdays: A nifty trip-hop night called "Nice & Easy." Alternate Fridays: loved-up house music from D.J.'s Holmar and A. Gram at "N'Ice"; the friendly, long-running house-music party "Bang the Party." Saturdays: "Direct Drive," a strictly drum-'n'-bass night with D.J.'s Lion, Seoul, Cassien, Reid Speed, and Chris Thomas. Log on to www.baktun.com for complete schedule. *418 W. 14th St. (212-206-1590).*

Black Betty —A wondrously eclectic nightspot in Williamsburg. Wednesdays and Thursdays: "D.J.-O-Rama," D.J.'s spinning everything from hip-hop, dance-hall reggae, and funk. Sundays: "Jazz on Sundays." Mondays: "Rhythm on Mondays," anything with a groove from Afro-Cuban jazz to sixties soul. 12/13: Nagual. *366 Metropolitan Ave., Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-599-0243).*

Centro-Fly—The club formerly known as Tramp's is now a hot spot to groove to D.J.'s. And there's more good news: The new owners have already managed to snag the house/trip-hop/big-beat promoters "Plant" for their Saturday nights. 12/11: "Plant" presents D.J. Johnny Fiasco. *45 W. 21st St. (212-803-7859).*

Cheetah—This Chelsea–Flatiron district nightspot has suddenly become a great dance-music destination, thanks to "Twelve West," "Underground Network," and "Legends." Tuesdays: "Twelve West," D.J. Nicky Siano's wildly fun, campy after-work party where Chelsea boys, fierce voguers, and men in Superman costumes (!) get their groove on for an early-week romp that rivals the ecstatic energy of "Body & Soul." Wednesdays: "Underground Network" returns. Thursdays: "Legends" with D.J.'s Adam Scott and Danny Krivit. *12 W. 21st St. (212-206-7770).*

Izzy Bar—Like Orchard Bar, Izzy Bar is less a watering hole than a place to chill out and hear some cutting-edge tunes. Tuesdays: Neil Aline, host of NYU's ultrahip "BPM" radio show, hosts "Rendez-Vous," a strictly no-D.J.'s party where media folk, artists, and others take their shot on the wheels of steel. Thursdays: big name D.J.'s like

Todd Terry and Frankie Feliciano drop by for "Assorted Flavors." Saturdays: Things get funky with the hip-hop-and-soul-dominated "Say It Loud." *166 First Ave., at 11th St. (212-228-0444). $.*

"Jingo"—12/11 at 10. D.J.'s Ron Trent; Nicodemus; Mariano; Nat. *1 Front St., at Old Fulton St., Brooklyn (no phone number; check www.gianstep.net for further information).*

Life—Okay, we give. It is the only hip place on Bleecker Street, even if the doormen can get a little tough on those they deem unworthy. What bouncers don't? Wednesdays: "On!" offers a mod-influenced, Austin Powers–esque midweek romp. Also on Wednesday (in the club's lounge) is "Legends," a soulful-house party with music from resident D.J. Adam Scott. Thursdays: "Get a Life!" with D.J.'s Jackie Christie, Lady Bunny, and David Holland. Fridays: "Flash Fridays" with legendary D.J. Grandmaster Flash, who spins surprisingly mainstream, Hot 97–ready hip-hop. Sundays: "Flick6ix," whose hosts show campy films and stage appropriately themed live entertainment, takes over. *158 Bleecker St. (212-420-1999).*

The Roxy—The cavernous Chelsea institution's deeply entertaining and mysteriously underattended Tuesday- and Wednesday-night roller-skating jam keeps boogie queens' wheels spinning till the wee hours. Fridays: "Big Fridays" offer big fun for the weekender-straight crowd. Saturdays: Superstar D.J. Victor Calderone spins house for the Chelsea boys while hard-bodied go-go boys dance on the bar. *515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). $.*

Twilo—Twilo is *the* superclub of the moment, thanks to a revolving lineup of dance music's biggest marquee attractions. Wednesdays: The upstairs lounge hosts hard house and techno with "2K Wednesdays." Fridays: World-class D.J.'s like Carl Cox, Sasha and Digweed, and Cassius play for a mixed crowd of drag divas and on-the-prowl straights. Saturdays: Aging club king D.J. Junior Vasquez spins for his bare-chested Chelsea-boy following. 12/10: Paul Van Dyk. *530 W. 27th St. (212-268-1600).*

Vinyl—Stripped of its liquor license, this once-hedonistic downtown space is now a dance-music purist's paradise and quite possibly the best club in the city. Wednesdays: "Little" Louie Vega spins at the relaxed, low-key (for now), dance-friendly (check out the break-dancers in the back of the room) house party "Dance Ritual." Fridays: hard, trippy house (affectionately nicknamed "K-hole house" by its aficionados) from D.J. Danny Tenaglia. Saturdays: Timmy Regisford's fantastic house-music party "Shelter," which, at about seven in the morning, becomes the city's most adventurous party, as Regisford bangs out everything from the Afro-beat of Fela Kuti to the ambient, pillow-soft house of Mr. Fingers. Sundays: François K, Joe Claussell, and Danny Krivit spin at the now legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." Arrive early or you'll face a devastatingly long line at the door. Monthly: Renowned Japanese-trance D.J. Tsuyoshi Suzuki. 12/8: Dance Ritual presents "Flashback" with D.J.'s "Little" Louie Vega and Todd Terry. *6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).*

The Warehouse—Manhattan-centric clubbers have been eating their bridge-and-tunnel-dissing crow, thanks to this house-music paradise located in, of all places, the Bronx. Saturdays are the night to head up to the venue and check out D.J.'s like T-Pro and Andre Collins. Could this be the beginning of an outer-borough clubland renaissance? *141 W. 140th St., bet. Grand Concourse and Walton Aves. (718-992-5974).*

Windows on the World—12/7: "Little Debbie" Funk Night with D.J. John. 12/8: "Mondo 107." 12/9: "Mambo, Baby?" 12/10: "Swing!" 12/11: "Swing!" 12/13: "Little Debbie" Funk Night with D.J. John. *1 World Trade Center, 107th fl. (212-524-7000).*

Performance

Something About Keith

Actor-singer Keith David was enjoying a quiet bistro meal in Australia when he suddenly found himself under siege. "A whole bunch of kids came in and said, 'That's Mary's father!' " recalls David in his mellifluous baritone. They recognized him from his role in *There's Something About Mary* as Cameron Diaz's stepfather, who memorably counseled Ben Stiller's agitated Ted through an especially excruciating encounter with a stuck zipper. But long before his notorious "frank and beans" moment, the Corona, Queens–raised David turned in strong performances in *Platoon,* the Broadway production of *Jelly's Last Jam* (for which he received a Tony nomination), and Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* at the Public Theatre. Currently, he's venturing about as far as possible from bathroom humor, crooning the ballads of singers like Nat King Cole, Joe Williams, and Johnny Hartman in a series of solo performances at the Hotel Delmonico's D Lounge. "I'm a hopeless romantic," he confides, speaking by phone from his home in Brooklyn. "I believe in love." Not to mention love songs—specifically those made famous by Nat King Cole. "Nat is the best storyteller in the world," David continues. "When I listen to his songs and hear those lyrics, I want to be in love like that." The D Lounge's intimate atmosphere makes it the ideal venue for David—his emotional singing voice, heartfelt interpretations, and easy rapport with the audience make it clear he could be a successful singer in his own right. For now, though, he still has both feet firmly on the ground: "I have learned that romantic love in and of itself is not enough," he says. "It has to be accompanied by other practicalities. But if you can have them both in a wonderful balance, then life is beautiful." December 10, 11, 14, 15. (See "Cabaret.") **LUISA COLON**

Jazz

Birdland—Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Every Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday in December, the Ellington Orchestra. Every Friday, the Lew Anderson Big Band swings from 5:30 to 7:30. $15–$20 cover; $10 minimum. Sets at 9 and 11:00. 12/9–12/11: Freddy Cole. 12/13: Maria Schneider Jazz Orchestra. *315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a first-rate sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30. *131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).*

George Winston—12/8 at 7:30. *New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Newark (888-GO-NJPAC). $10–$46.*

Iridium—In this surreal basement venue across from Lincoln Center, you'll find formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. 12/7–12/12: Jacky Terrasson Sextet. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (212-582-2121).*

"Jazz at Lincoln Center: Ellington's Sacred Music"—Through 12/12. 12/7 at 7: "In the Beginning—Spirituality and the Music of Duke Ellington," led by Barry Ulanov. *Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, 165 West 65th Street, tenth floor. (212-721-6500). $10.* 12/8 at 8: "Common Ground," led by Eric Reed, with Wycliffe Gordon. *Hubbard Hall, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. Free.* 12/9–12/12 at 8: "In His Solitude—The Sacred Music of Duke Ellington," featuring guest music director Eric Reed, First Lady of Gospel Shirley Caesar, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis, other guest vocalists. *Alice Tully Hall, 65th and Broadway (212-721-6500). $20–$45.*

"Jazz Insights—Hoagy Jazz: A Centennial Tribute to Hoagy Carmichael."—Informal lectures hosted by Arnold Jay Smith. 12/7: Jack Kleinsinger. Tuesdays, 7:45–9:30. *The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5873). $25.*

The Jazz Standard—A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, living legends, and hungry young comers. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7, guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 8 and 10, Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight, Sun. at 7 and 9. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. *116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232).*

Museum of Modern Art—Fridays, in addition to throwing its doors open for pay-what-you-wish night, MOMA also transforms its cafeteria into a (sort of) swinging jazz club. All shows at 5:30. The museum's Sette restaurant offers jazz Thursdays and Saturdays, 6–10. 12/10: Claudia Acuna Quartet. *11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-0480).*

Photograph by John Simon.

Photograph courtesy of Lincoln Center.

Performance
Divine Duke

Lincoln Center's Sacred Music Week, a series of performances and lectures December 6 through 12 examining Duke Ellington's "Sacred Concerts," is the rare jazz tribute that reaches outside the genre for inspiration. Accordingly, the highlight will be "In his Solitude—The Sacred Music of Duke Ellington," which runs December 9 through 12 and features gospel great Shirley Caesar (pictured) as well as Wynton Marsalis with the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. (See "Jazz.")

Red Blazer—Mondays: Lenore and the Dukes. Tuesdays: Stan Ulano's Swing Band. Wednesdays: The John Gill Band. Thursdays: Stan Rubin's Big Band featuring Cary Hoffman. Fridays: Kelly Friessen's Gritty City Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell's Jazz Quintet. *32 W. 37th St. (212-947-6428).*

Roulette—A TriBeCa performance space featuring experimental and adventurous music—basically, a miniature Knitting Factory. 12/10: Jon Gibson & David Behrman. 12/11: Yuko Fujiyama; Ikue Mori; Yuki Saga. 12/12: Jim Staley; Ikue Mori; Phoebe Legere; Steve Butters. Shows at 9. *228 W. Broadway (212-219-8242). $8.*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start around 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Shows start at 10. *183 W. 10th St. (212-929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. *88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (212-242-1785).*

Tonic—Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, Tonic has its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sunday: "Klezmer Sundays." 12/8: Sam Bardfeld's Cabal Fatale 12/9: Mr. Dorgon & I-Sound; Noel Akchote, Charlie O. & Quentin Rollet; Joey Baron's Killer Joey. 12/10: Michaël Attias Sextet; Roy Nathanson's Alphabet Lounge Big Band. 12/11: Elliott Sharp; Ernest Tubb Memorial Orchestra. 12/12: Zmiros Yisroel. *107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503). $.*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. 12/7–12/12: David Sanchez Sextet. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (212-255-4037). $.*

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—*Animal House* ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Tues.–Thurs., shows at 9:30; Fri.–Sat., shows at 8,10, and midnight. Jim Norton, D. C. Benny, Jim Gaffigan, Robert Kelly, Jordan Rubin, Nick Swardson & Macio. *82 W. 3rd St. (212-477-1000).*

Carolines on Broadway—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (212-757-4100). $12.50–$24.50; two-drink minimum.*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 9, 10:45, and 12:30; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. Through 12/12: Colin Quinn; Mitch Fatel; Tom Papa; Greg Giraldo; Jim Norton; Robert Kelly. *117 Macdougal St. (212-254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (212-861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri.; Sat. $15 cover for 8 and 12:30 shows, $20 cover for 10:30 show; $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (212-593-1650).*

Gotham—A trendy comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Every Tues. and Sun., "New Talent Showcase." Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights. Two-drink minimum. *34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).*

"Spin Cycle Comedy"—Comedy from Danny Cohen and Jodie Wasserman while you separate your whites and colors. Really. *King Size Laundromat, 178 Seventh Ave. at 20th St., (212-501-6016). Free.*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Cover is $7–$12. Shows: Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri. at 7, 9, and 11:30. Sat. at 8, 10, and 12. *236 W. 78th St. (212-595-0850).*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Fresh from a major overhaul, the Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. (Early shows Tues.–Sat., late shows Fri. & Sat.) Sundays: The Howard Fishman Quartet. Through 12/25: Andrea Marcovicci. *59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).*

Arci's Place—A Murray Hill–area Italian restaurant with an intimate cabaret space. Through 12/19: Marilyn Volpe performs "New Year's Eve 1949," Fridays at 9 and Sundays at 3. 12/12: Karen Mason in "Christmas! Christmas! Christmas!" *450 Park Ave. So., at 30th St. (212-532-4370).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. Late dining. *13 E. 12th St. (212-741-9105).*

Cafe Carlyle—Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band at 8:45. $60. Bobby Short plays two shows nightly (Tuesday-Saturday) at 8:45 and 10:45. $60. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600).*

Cafe Pierre—Tues.–Sat., singer-pianist Kathleen Landis performs works by Gershwin, Van Heusen, Arlen, and Rogers in "Where of When?." Sun.–Mon., Nancy Winston sings and plays piano. $19 minimum; jacket and tie required. *Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (212-940-8195).*

Don't Tell Mama—What better way to wind down after an evening of overwrought Broadway fare than some understated cabaret? Wednesdays at 8:30: "The Next Big Broadway Musical," an improvised comedy. $10 cover, two-drink minimum. 12/12: Mark Chapman; Jonathan Hunt; Elizabeth Hastings. Through 12/18: Tommy Femia in "Judy Garland Live!" *343 W. 46th St. (212-757-0788). $.*

Feinstein's at the Regency—Michael Feinstein's brand-new cabaret space at the Regency Hotel shares the room with the restaurant "540 Park." Michael Feinstein appears twice nightly (8:30 and 11 P.M.) Tickets are $60; $50 food-and-drink minimum. *540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (212-307-4100 or 212-339-4095).*

FireBird Café—The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, right next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen and you'll be fine. Wed.–Thurs., sets at 9. Fri. and Sat., sets at 9 and 11. $30 cover; $20 minimum. 12/12: Alexandra Haas's *On Foreign Shores*. *363 W. 46th St. (212-586-0244).*

Hotel Delmonico—12/10, 12/11, 12/14, 12/15: Keith David. *502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (212-486-0508).*

Judy's—Newly relocated to Chelsea, this cozy and friendly piano bar features two performance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Judy herself. 12/07: Michael McQuary, "Man of 1,001 Faces." 12/8: Nanci Collyer and David Lewis. 12/9: Frans Bloem. 12/10: Ruby Rims presents "Teddy Care Benefit 1999." 12/11: Judy Kreston and David Lahm in "Portrait of the Artist." 12/12: John McMahon; Leslie Orofino; Dominic Chianese. 12/13: Irina Maleeva. *169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18th and 19th Sts. (212-929-5410).*

Ground Rules:

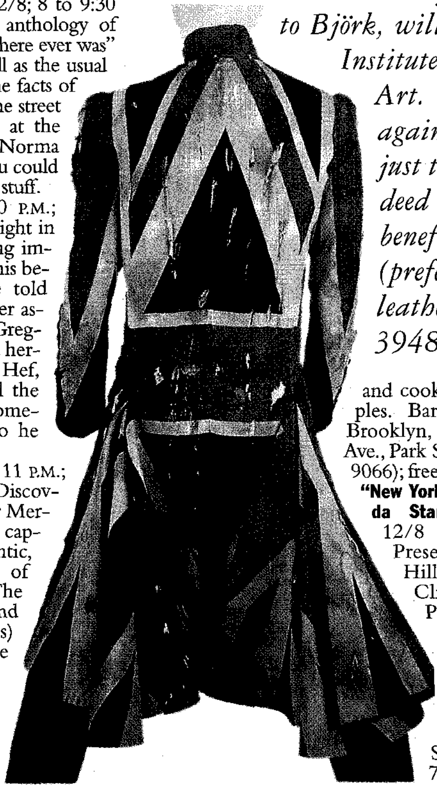
In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

the mix

Kurt Vonnegut and Lee Stringer...John Glenn

Happening
Legends of the Mall

If you're tired of looking at the polyester-with-feathers knockoffs at Strawberry, come check out real rock-star outfits like David Bowie's Union Jack coat (pictured, left) and Madonna's pointy-breasted bustier (right). From December 9 through March 19, "Rock Style," a selection of garments warn by musicians from Janis Joplin to Björk, will be on display at the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Your chances of brushing up against the actual stars instead of just their old clothes is very high indeed if you attend the institute's benefit on December 6. Black-tie (preferably one made of sequined leather) only; call 212-570-3948 for tickets and details.



John Leonard's TV Notes

A Walk Through Harlem with David Hartman and Historian Barry Lewis (12/7; 8 to 9:45 P.M.; Channel 13) allows the television personality and the architectural historian to look at Hamilton Heights, Sugar Hill, Strivers' Row and the Mother A.M.E. Zion Church, while thinking about Marcus Garvey, Sojourner Truth, Malcolm X, and Duke Ellington. A rich addendum to the superb Ric Burns documentary series on New York City.

Ella Fitzgerald—Something to Live For (12/8; 8 to 9:30 P.M.; Channel 13) is a sumptuous anthology of recorded performances by "the best there ever was" (according to Johnny Mathis), as well as the usual "American Masters" rundown on the facts of her life, from running numbers on the street to reform school to her premiere at the Apollo Theatre—where, dancer Norma Miller tells us, "When she finished you could hear a rat piss on cotton." Wonderful stuff.

Hefner Unauthorized (12/12; 8 to 10 P.M.; USA) seems to want at once to delight in and to deplore the playboy's lifelong impersonation of a randy Peter Pan. This bemused docudrama appears to be told from the point of view of his former assistant, Bobbie Arnstein (Natasha Gregson Wagner), even though she killed herself in 1975. Randall Batinkoff plays Hef, aging not a whit or wrinkle until the movie's last several frames, as if somewhere a centerfold rotted away so he could go on bunny-hopping.

In Search of *Liberty Bell 7* (12/12; 9 to 11 P.M.; Discovery) is a film account of the Discovery Channel's expedition to recover Mercury astronaut Gus Grissom's space capsule from the bottom of the Atlantic, where it's been since the dawn of NASA'S Mercury program in 1961. The modern underwater sonar-search and ROVs (remotely operated vehicles) are almost more intriguing than the lost capsule itself.

A Season for Miracles (12/12; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS) is worth watching if only for Carla Gugino as the young aunt who must save her niece and nephew from the evil social worker Kathy Baker, who would fling them into foster care just because their mother, Laura Dern, is a drug addict. On the run, Gugino and the kids end up in a town called, um, Bethlehem, where David Conrad is a handsome cop, Lynn Redgrave is a funny judge, and Patty Duke is whoever she wants to be, whenever, depending, because angels can do what they want. There is a perfectly reasonable lesson about forgiveness underneath all this confectionary sugar. But Gugino is beyond reason.

Lectures and Panels

"The Best American Recipes of 1999"—12/7 at 7:30 P.M.: Fran McCullough and Suzanne Hamlin, editors of this new cookbook culled from the Internet, magazines, and newspapers, discuss their finds and cook up some samples. Barnes & Noble Brooklyn, 267 Seventh Ave., Park Slope (718-832-9066); free.

"New York Women's Agenda Star Breakfast"—12/8 at 7:30 A.M.: Presentations by Hillary Rodham Clinton, Libby Pataki, Donna Hanover, and Kathleen Turner. New York Hilton and Towers, 53rd St. and Sixth Ave. (212-764-6992); $55.

Deepak Chopra and Robert A.F. Thurman—12/9 at 7 P.M.: The pair talk about Buddha and God and the relationship between spirituality and politics in the new millennium. Tibet House, 22 W. 15th St. (212-807-0563); $75 (proceeds to benefit Tibet House).

"Tanakh & Testament: A Reprobate Tinkers with Holy Writ"—12/13 at 7 P.M.: Artist Barry Moser talks about his design and illustration of the Pennyroyal Caxton edition of the Holy Bible. The Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Ave., at 112th St. (212-316-7449); free.

The Written Word

The Final NightLight Reading—12/8 at 7 P.M.: The series (sadly) comes to an end with readings by Sheila Kohler from "Africans," Patrick McGrath from *Martha Peake,* and Lily Tuck from *"SLAM or The Woman Who Shot a Man."* The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166); $5.

Matthew Jacobson—12/8 at 7 P.M.: Reading from *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race.* Labyrinth Books, 536 W. 112th St. (212-865-1588); free.

Yusef Komunyakaa—12/8 at 7 P.M.: Reading recent work. Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 5 Union Square West (212-691-6590); $20 includes a book, drinks, and snacks.

Susan Brownmiller—12/8 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading from her new book, *In Our Time: Memoir of a Revolution.* Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 83rd St. (212-362-8835); free.

"*The Rolling Stone Book of the Beats* and *Paradise Outlaws*"—12/8 at 7:30 P.M.: Holly George-Warren, Mellon, John Tytell, Lee Ranaldo, Mark Kemp, Lauren Agnelli, and others read from the two books. Manitoba's, 99 Ave. B (212-982-2511); free.

Kurt Vonnegut and Lee Stringer—12/8 at 8:30 P.M.: Reading from their new collaborative book, *Shaking Hands With God.* Rocky Sullivan's, 159 Lexington Ave., near 27th St. (212-725-3871); free.

Kathryn Harrison, Dale Peck, Ron Rosenbaum, Meg Wolitzer—12/9 at 7:30 P.M.: Discussing two books: *The Walking Tour* by Kathryn Davis and *Brighton Rock* by Graham Greene. The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5488); $5.

Colson Whitehead, Danzy Senna, Margaret Cezair-Thompson—12/9 at 7 P.M.: Reading from their work; hosted by Paule Marshall. Vanderbilt Hall, NYU, 40 Washington Square South (212-998-8816); free.

John Glenn—12/10 at 12 P.M.: The astronaut-politician signs copies of his new memoir, called, appropriately, *John Glenn: A Memoir.* Barnes & Noble Rockefeller Center, 600 Fifth Ave., at 47th St. (212-957-2890); free.

"Strong Women: Readings from Nineteenth-Century Domestic Fiction"—12/11 at 3 P.M.: Readings by ac-

Photographs courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

GAME WEEK

HOME ▨ AWAY ░

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
GIANTS							BUF FOX 1 P.M.
JETS							MIA CBS 4 P.M.
ISLANDERS		WAS FSNY 7 P.M.		MON MSG 7:30 P.M.		OTT MSG 3 P.M.	
RANGERS	CAL MSG 7:30 P.M.		EDM MSG 7:30 P.M.				
DEVILS		PIT METRO 7:30 P.M.		CHI FSNY 8:30 P.M.		EDM FSNY 1 P.M.	
KNICKS		GSW MSG 7:30 P.M.			PHI MSG 8 P.M.		BOS MSG 7 P.M.
NETS	SAC FSNY 7:30 P.M.		MIL FSNY 7:30 P.M.		CHI FSNY 8:30 P.M.	HOU FSNY 8 P.M.	
	12/6	12/7	12/8	12/9	12/10	12/11	12/12

tress Barbara Feldon from the work of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Sarah Orne Jewett, and Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley. Brooklyn Museum of Art, 200 Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000, ext. 230); free with admission.

Sheila Kohler and Terese Svoboda—12/12 at 7 P.M.: Reading at KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (212-358-1935); free.

Roger Bonair-Agard—12/12 at 6:30 P.M.: Reading from his poetry. Cornelia Street Café, 29 Cornelia St. (212-989-9319); $5 includes a drink.

Tours

"Fifth Ave.: 42nd Street to 59th Street Remnants of Splendor"—12/11 at 11 A.M.: Visit the elegant and luxurious private homes and shops that still stand in midtown, reminders of the area's Gilded Age glory years. Meet at the southwest corner of Fifth Ave. and 42nd St., by the Public Library (212-935-3960); $10.

"A Victorian Christmas"—12/11–12/12 at noon: Have a gander at the nineteenth-century sites in Gramercy Park and the Ladies' Mile that illustrate how Victorian society shaped the way we celebrate the holiday today. For reservations and meeting place, call 212-465-3331; $12.

Events

International Human Rights Day—12/9 at 5 P.M.: A candlelight vigil and march against child labor and sweatshop abuse presented by the National Labor Committee in Support of Worker and Human Rights, with live music, giant puppets, and guest speakers. Meet on 57th St. bet. Fifth and Madison Aves. (212-242-3002); free.

"New York Armory Christmas Antiques Show"—12/8–12/12: Seventeenth-through-twentieth-century American, English, French, Continental, Oriental, and Deco antiques, jewelry, posters, books, and more for collecting and giving. Seventh Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. (800-649-0279); $9.

Benefits

"An Evening in Lhasa"—12/7 at 6:30 P.M.: An auction of a variety of stuff—tickets to the Grammys in 2000; trips to Bali, Bhutan, Mongolia, and Nepal; Tibetan antiques; celebrities' former possessions—to benefit Tibet House, hosted by Uma Thurman, Ethan Hawke, and Philip Glass. Sotheby's Auction House, 1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-807-0563); $75 & $100.

"1999 New York Women in Film & Television Gala Holiday Luncheon"—12/7 at 11:30 A.M.: "Muse" awards to be presented to Mary Lea Bandy, Anjelica Huston, Barbara Kopple, Marquita Pool-Eckert, and Cicely Tyson. Grand Ballroom of New York Hilton & Towers, 1335 Sixth Ave., at 54th St. (212-838-6033); $175.

"A Joyous Christmas"—12/13–12/14 at 7:30 P.M.: To benefit Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, a concert featuring original material by Terrence McNally, performed by Betty Buckley, Victor Garber, Julie Harris, and Cherry Jones. St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 51st St. (212-378-0248 or 212-840-0770); $35–$150.

Exhibitions

"Cold War Television"—Through 12/26: A screening package with excerpts from the documentary *When Television Was Young,* blacklisted writer Abraham Polonsky's *You Are There: "The Crisis of Galileo,"* and *The Defenders: "Blacklist."* Museum of Television & Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (212-621-6600); $6.

"American Families: Beyond the White Picket Fence"—Through 2/1/00: Photographs of lesbian moms, interracial and teenage families, stepparents, single parents, and anyone else trying to construct something a little more turn-of-the-millennium than the old *Ozzie and Harriet* model. 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $10.

"The Italians of New York: Five Centuries of Struggle and Achievement"—Through 2/20/00: Revisit the public lives of prominent Italians in the city. New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); $5.

"NYC Century"—Through 7/9/00: One hundred objects reflecting the range of perspectives on the twentieth-century New York City experience. Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-6272); $5.

Online

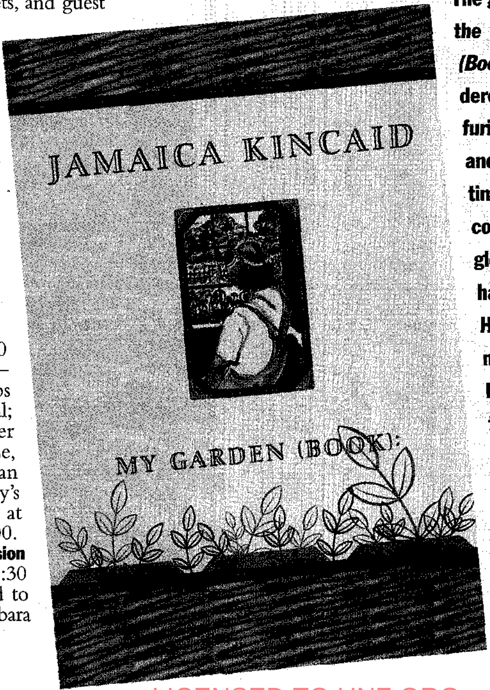
***New York* on the Web**—"Best Bets" is online! Now you can check out Corky Pollan's weekly shopping column on our newly relaunched site. Plus, gift ideas from our "Holiday Gifts" issue are available online throughout the season, along with an online shopping guide. Also on www.nymag.com; the "Surf Report" reviews an astrology site and an interactive Website for mystery buffs; "Daily Events" keeps you up to date on all of the coolest happenings in Gotham, whether they're unusual exhibits or movie revivals; and you can plan weekend getaways with the help of "52 Weekends." And as always, you can browse through our extensive archive of

In Print

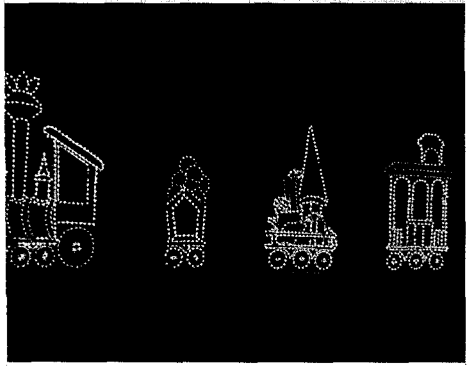
Let It Grow, Let It Grow, Let It Grow

When Jamaica Kincaid lived in a two-floor house on Hudson Street in 1977 (for which she paid $275 a month), she grew "little boxes of things on the roof," she says, "but not with any passion." It wasn't until she and her husband moved to Vermont and he presented her with a rake, a spade, and some flower seeds on Mother's Day that Kincaid truly felt the pull of the garden: "I was overcome with a wild addiction." A wild addiction that dovetails nicely with her day job as a writer. "It's a perfect match," she says. "I think about one while I'm doing the other. People say, 'Oh, you know, gardening is the enemy of writing,' but I do not share that opinion. The garden is a place of mental disturbance." But gardening *is* the enemy of Kincaid's kids. In the dedication of *My Garden (Book)*, a collection of personal essays on topics she's pondered in her plot, she writes that they "from time to time are furiously certain that the only thing standing between them and a perfect union with their mother is the garden, and from time to time they are correct." Kincaid admits that when it's come down to a choice between ignoring her garden or neglecting her children, there have been times that her garden has won out. "I'd been trying to dismantle a little hill. My son Harold is 11, so I assumed he was out of the sledding business, but when he saw what I'd done, he said, '*Mom.* That hill held some of my most treasured memories!' At first I thought he was joking, but then he had tears in his eyes," she says. "I think if my children ever come to garden themselves, they will keep it a deep secret. Otherwise I'll be able to say, 'See? I told you so.'" She will be reading at Barnes & Noble Union Square December 7 at 7:30 P.M.

ARIEL LEVY



On View **In case you hadn't noticed, it's a little too chilly out for flowers, let alone people. But while you won't see any cheery bluebells at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden these days, you will be treated to "Blooming Lights," a display of 33 outdoor exhibits like a field of incandescent tulips, a glittering archway of poinsettias, and a snowman who juggles roses, all fashioned from Christmas lights. Wednesdays through Sundays starting at 5:30 P.M. until January 6. Call 718-623-7333 for more information; admission is $2 or $5 depending on your age.**



New York Magazine back issues and articles, participate in our daily poll and New York trivia contest, and read selected articles from the current issue.

Sports

10K Sunday—Get ready to run 6.2 miles on 12/12 when the New York Road Runners Club holds its annual Joe Kleinerman race in honor of one of its founding members. The course starts at East Park Drive and 85th Street at 9:30 A.M., and concludes at Engineer's Gate (Fifth Avenue and East 90th Street) after a counterclockwise loop around Central Park. Cash awards will be given to the top male and female finishers. There is a $17 non-member entry fee and limited race-day entries for $22. You may register online at www.nyrrc.org., or call 212-860-4455 for more information.

Day Adventures—The Five Borough Bicycle Club offers two journeys this weekend. On Saturday, 12/11, as part of its Zoo Series, visit the New York Aquarium. You'll pedal a total of 25 miles along the Shore Parkway's bike path out to Coney Island and return via Ditmas Park and the streets of Midwood . Bring a lock and money for lunch and admission. Meets at 9:30 A.M. at City Hall (near Centre and Chambers Streets). On Sunday, 12/12, it's a 25-mile Frostbite Ride to the Flat Rock Nature Preserve in New Jersey. And don't let the name be a deterrent; you'll have a hearty lunch and return before dark. Meets at 9 A.M.. at City Hall. For additional information on these and other free rides, call 5BBC at 212-932-2300, ext. 115, or visit www. 5bbc.org.

Communal Fun—The Road Runners Club has group runs throughout the week that won't cost you a penny. Monday through Friday, join the morning run at 6:30 A.M. or the evening outing at 6:30 P.M., and sleep in on the weekend—Saturday and Sunday runs start at 10 A.M. All runs are organized by pace and distance; meet at the NYRRC Information Kiosk at 90th Street and Fifth Avenue. For more information, call Belinda at 212-423-2219.

Photograph courtesy of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

Leonard *continued from page 78*

atrocity pictures of children murdered because their families didn't stick with the program. While Bobby's being irrational, and Cindy hysterical, and Sean a teenager, and Suzie cute, Beck is all over them like the weather; he contains their climates.

Sizemore, from so much practice in movies like *Strange Days* and *Natural Born Killers,* knows how to be a complicated brute. Mastrantonio mostly keens—for the lost upwardness of her mobility, for the unraveling of her nest. Hatosy actually makes us believe that a petulant juvenile could love his little sister enough to give his unpleasant father an undeserved second chance. Daniel Therriault's screenplay and Richard Pearce's direction know enough to tiptoe around Whitaker, who knows he'll be sending these people out into another sort of limbo, naked and clueless refugees from themselves.

And in the odd way these things work, we almost immediately meet Whitaker's next customer. He will be William Baldwin in **Brotherhood of Murder** (Sunday, December 12; 8 to 9:30 P.M.; Showtime), a generally listless docudrama adapted by Robert J. Avrech from the nonfiction book by Tom Martinez as told to John Guinther. Martinez, who imagines himself a descendant of Spanish nobility, finds on his return to Philadelphia in 1983 after an unhappy stint in the Army that, because of affirmative action, black people and other minorities have all the semi-skilled jobs he needs to support his wife (Kelly Lynch) and newborn child. He drifts into the embrace of the Order, an Aryan supremacy group led by the charismatic crazy Bob Mathews—played by Peter Gallagher with so much weird hair piled on top of his bruised face that he looks like a ticket to Jonestown. In Washington State, Bob and his paranoid losers plot the robbery of a Brinks armored car and the assassination of Denver radio talk-show host Alan Berg (Rob LaBelle).

Martinez, not so hot on either target practice or *Mein Kampf,* decides that he abhors violence altogether. So when the FBI grabs him for passing counterfeit money, he cuts a deal. By the end of the TV movie in the usual Waco shootout, I know I'm supposed to be thinking about Ruby Ridge, Oklahoma City, and state violence versus domestic terrorism. But I'm thinking instead about the Baldwin brothers, all of whom have this sort of pulp cunning. And about Peter Gallagher, who'd be better off in a musical with Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio. And about the witness-protection program into which, of course, Tom Martinez disappeared—as if it were a secret society, an underground cell, a Druidic cult, or Creeps Anonymous. ■

John Leonard's 1997–99 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Solutions to last week's puzzles

C	A	P	T	A	I	N	S	■	A	S	G	A	R	D
E	■	R	■	S	■	E	■	■	■	O	■	N	■	R
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E	■	C	■	A	■	D	■	M	■	N	■	A	■	B
B	U	R	K	I	N	A	F	A	S	O	■	■	■	■
R	■	E	■	■	■	R	■	R	■	L	■	C	■	O
I	R	A	Q	I	■	W	A	R	D	E	D	O	F	F
T	■	N	■	C	■	I	■	O	■	N	■	U	■	I
I	N	T	H	E	K	N	O	W	■	T	U	R	I	N
S	■	S	■	H	■	I	■	F	■	■	■	A	■	D
■	■	■	■	O	U	A	G	A	D	O	U	G	O	U
K	■	S	■	C	■	N	■	T	■	T	■	E	■	S
I	N	T	A	K	E	■	S	P	E	A	K	O	U	T
N	■	O	■	E	■	■	■	E	■	G	■	U	■	R
G	L	A	D	Y	S	■	F	A	M	O	U	S	L	Y

T	S	A	R	S	■	■	F	E	S	T	I	V	E	■	S	P	R	A	T	S
A	L	D	O	U	S	■	A	D	M	I	R	A	L	■	T	R	I	V	E	T
M	O	Z	A	R	T	■	T	O	O	K	O	N	E	T	O	O	M	A	N	Y
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T	R	A	V	E	L	E	R	S	C	H	E	C	K	■	■	E	C	L	A	T
L	A	D	I	D	A	■	A	S	H	Y	■	K	I	S	S	■	H	E	M	I
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kids

Instrument Petting Zoo...*Swarm*

Instruction

Calling On Your Inner Clown

It can't all be as deliriously glamorous as prancing about in the sawdust in a gray wig and frumpy housecoat and clutching a battered handbag. Circus clowns turned New York Goofs Barry Lubin (right, formerly "Grandma" with the Big Apple Circus), Tiffany Riley (left), and Dick Monday (center) share insights into the anxiety-inducing process that goes on before the show. Figuring out how to be funny in the first place is a serious subject at "Learn to Be a Clown" workshops, part of Lincoln Center's "Circus Dreaming" event this weekend. "The key to becoming funnier," according to Monday—former director of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College—is to "become more perceptive about what's around you. Look closely at how somebody walks," he suggests: "Do they lead with their head, their lower body, or their shoulders? Try walking like that, and see how it makes you feel." Audience volunteers will walk one another's walks onstage and try out a couple of gags. When the amateurs get laughs every time—with an old favorite where the smart guy (or girl) tries, tries, and tries again to get a not-so-swift sidekick to pose for a photograph—two of Monday's mathematical clowning principles are proved: "Ninety-nine percent of the kids always want to be the dumb one," and, worth remembering, "the magic number in comedy is three." (The New York Goofs perform before and after a screening of *Lucy at the Circus*, part of an ongoing "Reel to Real" series at Lincoln Center that pairs onscreen events with complementary live performances and workshops. December 11 at 11:30 and 2 at the Walter Reade Theater; tickets are $12 for adults, $6 for kids under 15.) BARBARA ENSOR

Children's Events

Smaller Nuts to Crack—Uncle Drosselmeyer welcomes children in the audience to the party in **NEW YORK THEATRE BALLET**'s hourlong version of *The Nutcracker*, designed for kids under 12. 12/17 through 12/27. Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160). Tickets are $20 for adults, $18 for children 12 and under. Part of the "Holiday Sampler," *The Brooklyn Nutcracker*, performed by faculty and students at the **BROOKLYN MUSIC SCHOOL**, has Clara dancing through multiethnic Brooklyn neighborhoods, skating in Prospect Park, and dreaming on a subway bench, 12/10 at 8 and 12/11 at 4. 126 St. Felix St. (718-638-5660). Tickets are$15, $5 for children under 5.

Antidote—A quiet oasis amid the midtown bustle can be found at the **DAHESH MUSEUM**, where stories from faraway places are offered (space is limited), 12/11 at 2:30. 601 Fifth Ave., at 48th St. (212-759-0606; www.daheshmuseum.org). Free.●●

Illuminated—Jim Napolitano causes more than a hundred shadow puppets to flicker across the screen in a free performance of "Shadows 'n' Light" at the **PROVINCETOWN PLAYHOUSE**, 12/12 at 3. For children 6 and up. 133 Macdougal St., bet. 3rd and 4th Sts. (212-998-5867).●●

Making Tracks—Paul Deifel, designer of the "Trains Through Time" retrospective display at the **BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN**, answers questions about model-train design and history, Saturday afternoons through 1/2/00. 900 Washington Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-7200; www.bbg.org.). Admission is free Tuesday through Friday and from 10 to noon on Saturdays. Saturday afternoon and Sunday, admission is $3, $1.50 for students and children under 16. The **NEW YORK BOTANIC GARDEN**'s "Holiday Train Show"—fashioned, except for the train and tracks, entirely out of natural materials—adds six new Hudson River Valley mansions this year. Puppets portraying old-fashioned steam engines stage "The Little Engine That Could" weekends through 1/2/00. 200th St. at Kazimiroff Blvd., the Bronx. Admission is $3, $2 for seniors and students, $1 for children ages 2 to 12. Free on Wednesdays and Saturdays until noon.●

Orchestral Wildlife—Benjamin Britten's *Young People's Guide to the Orchestra* is performed by the **GREENWICH VILLAGE ORCHESTRA**, part of its annual "Children's Concert." Before and after the concert, an "instrument petting zoo" allows kids to try playing any instrument that strikes their fancy. (Bring coloring pencils and crayons for games and picture-making activities.) 12/12 at noon. Washington Irving High School, 40 Irving Place, one block east of Union Square. For information, call 212-807-6480. Suggested donation, $10 for adults, $5 for students and seniors.

O, Tannenbaum—Eat, drink, be merry, and make some ornaments out of natural materials to decorate the 24-foot tree beside **CENTRAL PARK**'s Charles Dana Discovery Center, 12/9. Decorating from 4:30 to 6, holiday music and tree lighting from 6 to 6:30. Near Fifth Ave. and 110th St. (212-860-1370).●●

Seasoned With Yiddish—"Kids and Yiddish: A Yiddische Hanukkah for Kids" mixes seasonal traditions with songs, skits, puppetry, and klezmer music. For kids ages 4 to 14. Sundays in December at 11 A.M. **THE FOLKSBIENE YIDDISH THEATRE** at Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th Street (212-213-2120); $12.●

Swarm—A frenetic band of Australian kids between the ages of 10 and 18 known as the Flying Fruit Fly Circus turns a beyond-orderly classroom into wonderful, colorful, kinetic chaos; through 1/2/00. **THE NEW VICTORY THEATER**, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200). Tickets are $10–$35.●

Little Big Top—**BIG APPLE CIRCUS**'s "Bello & Friends" mixes the clown's acrobatic hilarity with flying-trapeze, hand-balancing, and elephant acts. The whole audience sits within 50 feet of the ring—the better to witness the incredible performing-house-cat act. Damrosch Park at Lincoln Center Plaza, 62nd St. bet. Columbus and Amsterdam Aves. Performances through 1/9/00. Tickets are $15–$60 on weeknights, $28–$60 on weekends, and can be purchased by calling 212-307-4100. For further information, call 800-922-3772.

Winter Solstice—*The Christmas Revels* at **SYMPHONY SPACE** observe medieval, distinctly unmillennial, rituals of music and dancing. Five performances 12/10 through 12/12; 95th St. and Broadway (212-864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org). Tickets are $21 to $33 for adults, $11 to $17 for children under 12.●

Kids Help Kids—Scrambled eggs and a photographed tête-à-tête with Santa help sick kids at the "Breakfast With Santa" benefit at **NADINE'S BANK STREET BAR & BISTRO**, 12/8 and 12/15 from 9 to 11 A.M. 99 Bank St. (212-924-3165). Reservations are required. The cost of admission is an unwrapped gift suitable for a baby or a child up to age 16.●

cue

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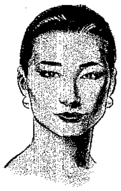

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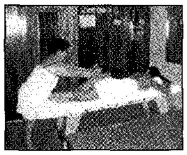

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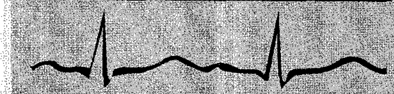

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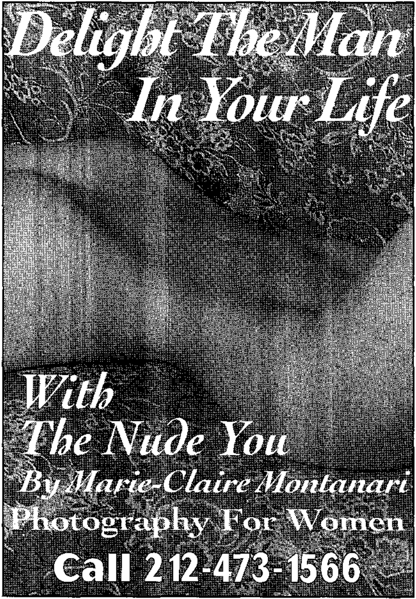

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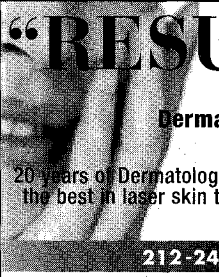

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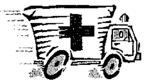

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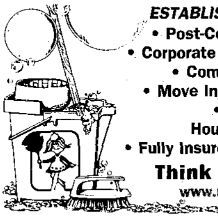

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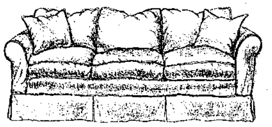

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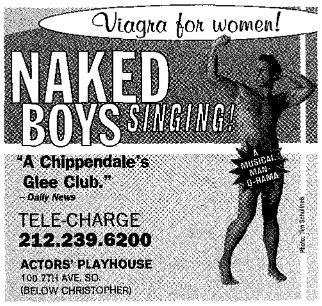

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Bring a new friend home for the holidays.

(because no one should have to face their relatives alone)

It's Just Lunch specializes in quality first dates for busy professionals.

It's fun, easy and relaxed. So, give us a call! We'd love to meet you and see if we're right for

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Be My Life Partner—To share passion, friendship and romance. You are 50-55, a highly accomplished, nonsmoking, handsome, fit Jewish man with a sense of humor and a sense of style to match, who believes in integrity, compassion and commitment. If looks are important, I'm a very pretty, slim woman who can look gorgeous in a gown or adorable in jeans, but the best of me is a warm, happy, bright, confident, sincere, passionate female who loves life. Together, we enjoy travel, dancing, tennis, golf, mutual spoiling and our families. Photo/note. 2619✉☎

Sparkling Blue Eyes—Great smile, 5'8", lover of life and laughter, passion for adventure, people person. Makes best broiled salmon and honey cake in town. Loves nature and culture. Jewish female, athletic, very intelligent, great listener and friend. Spiritual growth top priority. Studying Kabbalah. Looking for successful, Jewish creative leader, 48-56, who understands sharing is essence of life. 2599✉☎

Successful, Athletic, Handsome Lawyer—Seeking 28-35, bright and beautiful, together partner for upbeat and serious relationship. Photo/note, please. 2600✉

Handsome, Successful, Fit—Active and content, divorced white male, fun-loving, early 50s, looking for counterpart. Westchester. Note/phone/photo. 2612 ✉

Bright-Eyed Optimist—Affectionate, slim beauty, 42, blue eyes, brown hair, 5'6"; loves singing, workouts, the arts and travel. Seeking successful, nonsmoking man, 38-52, for best friend and lover. Fit, romanic, honest, fun and kindhearted. Note/photo. 2588 ✉

Impudent But Learned—Cultured, sophisticated, over 70? Very attractive, youthful lady seeks alter ego. 2581 ✉

You And I In 2000?—Elegant, beautiful lady, 5'7", early 50s, slim, fun-loving, successful, seeking warm, outgoing, sophisticated man with the ability to travel and share a full, comfortable, monogamous life. Note/photo. 2591 ✉

Manhattan Gem/CEO—Very pretty, slim, athletic, Jewish, NYC business owner, 37, seeks Jewish soul mate, 32-45, for lifelong partner. 2602 ✉☎

Like Me—Do you want a loving, caring relationship leading to marriage and family? Kind, bright, good-looking Jewish male, mid 40s, good shape, good sense of humor, great heart, different than the rest, is willing to do everything to find that too (including this ad). Please reply only with photo. 2571 ✉

Brainy Guy—Seeks slim blond female for NYC dates. POB 539, NYC 10101

One Plus One Equals A Couple—Single Asian female, mid 30s, 5'5", 120 lbs, MFA, self-employed, pretty, real/playful, passionate artist - seeks tall, educated, commitment/open-minded, emotionally/financially secure, single white male for TLC. Please be my age! Photo note. pair2b@aol.com. 2597 ✉

Extremely Pretty—And petite, very young-looking Jewish woman seeks professional, handsome, nice guy with great sense of humor and as few "issues" as possible, for potential "normal" relationship, i.e. theater, movies, dinner, hanging out, etc. (Walks on the beach not required!) You should be 36-42. Please send photo; no photo, no response. 2570✉

Society Lady/Debutante—(Late 40s) seeks gentleman of equal caliber, 50-70. Note/photo. 2580 ✉

Warm, Deep, Witty Male—Attractive psychologist, very young 60s, seeks sensitive, very pretty, young female (25-55). Photo/note. 2601 ✉

Jewish Widower—Nonsmoker. Dad, 36, with 1-year-old. Sincere, sensitive and a good sense of humor. Interests: sports, theater and travel. Seeks lady counterpart, 30-37. 2568 ✉

A New Beginning—Attractive, petite widow - Jewish female, 65, seeks special gentleman. First friendship, then romance. 2605 ✉

Strictly Personals Says
"Don't Miss a Date with Scrooge"
AMERICAN EXPRESS
PRESENTS
A Christmas Carol
the musical
NOV 26 - DEC 30 THE THEATER AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

Save $7 per ticket on select performances.
Call (212) 307-4111 and ask for code: NYMAG
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SEND

A WRITTEN RESPONSE
Here's How:

STRICTLY PERSONALS
New York Magazine, Box # _____
P.O. Box 4600
New York, New York 10163-4600

Nice-Looking, Successful, Educated—Manhattanite, 49, 5'10" and fit, seeks a striking, slender woman for union in the pursuit of life's passions. Photo/note/no smoke. 2589 ✉

George Bailey Seeks Mary Hatch—Old-fashioned, down-to-earth, successful, slim, 36, 5'9" - enjoys hiking, the ocean and the Yankees. Seeks Christian, single white female, 29-35, nonsmoker, to find Bedford Falls with. Note/photo. 2565 ✉

Easygoing, Personable Outdoorsman—Outgoing, heavyset but athletic, nonreligious Jewish (you need not be) engineer, 64, seeks an attractive, athletic, physically fit, warm and affectionate woman, 35-50, who enjoys sports, nature and outdoors. I am studious, sensitive, a good listener, and seek a companion, friend and lover to share the road ahead. Prefer northern NJ. Please reply with recent photo. 2607 ✉

Sparkling Brown-Eyed Beauty—Bad writer, great listener and conversationalist. Seeks warm, attractive, energetic man, 48-60, who loves to laugh. Note/photo/phone. 2584 ✉ ☎

Pretty, Lovely Lady—48, Jewish, 5'2", slim, unencumbered, seeks attractive, nicely-built Jewish man, financially secure, for a happy relationship. 2593 ✉

Will Be Wintering In Florida—Socialite seeks comparable gentleman (50-70) who appreciates a lady that is elegant and proper yet sexy and passionate. Note/ photo. 2579 ✉

32, MD, Russian-Born—Tall and stylish, with traditional values and diverse interests, a mom of a little boy. Looking for an honest, kindhearted, intelligent man to fall in love with. 2592 ✉

Seeks Quality Relationship—Pretty, witty, intelligent, emotionally secure widow seeks male, 48-58, 5'3", slim, brunette. Image is gamine with sex appeal. I value family, friends, art, books and good conversation. Must have a sense of humor. Photo/note, please. 2572 ✉

Handsome, Blue-Eyed Doctor—Jewish, chiropractor, 40, 5'10", brown hair, athletic build, sincere, down-to-earth, been single too long, seeks commitment-minded, Jewish, very attractive female, intelligent, health-conscious, mid 20s-mid 30s. Photo. 2608 ✉☎

Extremely Successful—Handsome executive, blue eyes, never married, very generous and physically very fit, seeking an attractive white female, 18 plus, to have mutually satisfying relationship, because you deserve the best. 2577 ✉

Hoping For Your Existence—Jewish male, mid 40s, enjoys travel, film, theater, fine food, gym, honesty, fun, reading, investing, creativity, giving, learning. Seeks female counterpart, 30s-mid 40s, attractive, secure, good-hearted, with a fine sense of humor. Photo, please. 2604 ✉

12/31/99

Sail Into The Millennium
GALA NEW YEAR'S EVE
CELEBRATION CRUISE
Sailing from North Cove Harbor, NYC.
For reservations: **212-524-9454**

Gay Guy In NY—Fit, attractive blond professional, 40. Great sense of humor. Seeks professional, masculine, 30-50, any race. 2583 ✉☎

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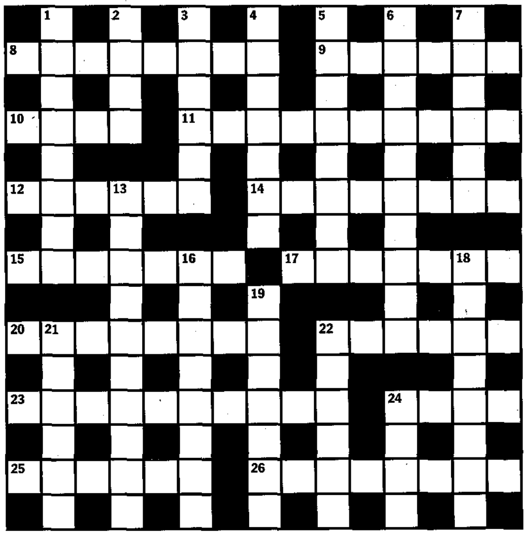
The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

8 Caused alarm to go off in the van. (8)
9 *It enables a writer to get rid of* unwanted characters. (6)
10 Cut price bargain. (4)
11 Generous daily help, albeit disorganised. (10)
12 I am in pursuit in a carriage. (6)
14 Animals involved in the chase. (8)
15 Canute's first little wave, one that halts. (7)
17 A row outside the Spanish workshop. (7)
20 Honoured by the electorate, dishonoured by the bank. (8)
22 Ice-cold. (6)
23 I agree *cost is incorporated in* order. (10)
24 No honours in this amorous advance. (4)
25 Set out to catch wild cat with sweet-smelling stuff. (6)
26 Tyres can burst in race. (8)



DOWN

1 Wreck on a chart firmly fixed. (2,6)
2 Support used by an actor. (4)
3 Gardening accessory that's old hat. (6)
4 Increase a loan. (7)
5 *Maybe his place is* rented out. (8)
6 Dance of triplets in later natal development. (10)
7 Good, when the glass is going up. (6)
13 Rashness and cheek? That's about right. (10)
16 Capital fellow, extremely single-minded. (8)
18 Disclosure made by a photographer. (8)
19 He has main control of his craft. (7)
21 Gets full satisfaction out of religious work. (6)
22 Coat to take to the cleaners. (6)
24 Sack butt. (4)

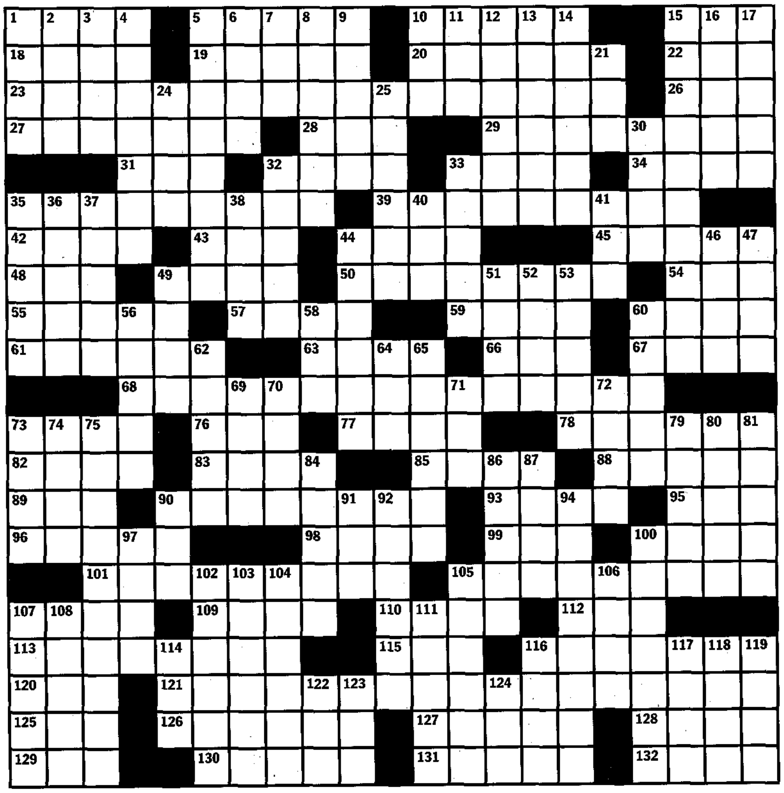
'Retrospective '99': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

1 Wan
5 Mideast potentates
10 Anna of opera fame
15 Matterhorn, for one
18 "Jeopardy!" emcee Trebek
19 Gymnast Comaneci
20 Coral islands
22 Before Virgo
23 Place in the '99 news
26 Certain phono records
27 Shooting stars
28 —— Lanka
29 Hired hand
31 Egg drink
32 Earth sci.
33 "The Rome of Hungary"
34 German autos
35 Trouble spot in the '99 news
39 Man in the '99 news
42 Beame and Burrows
43 Bronx attraction
44 Tabby's greeting
45 In an inescapable position
48 Sworn promise
49 Pod contents
50 Yearbook recorder
54 Victorian, e.g.
55 Swelling
57 Blue-winged duck
59 Hound sound
60 Den
61 U.S. Open winner Williams, '99
63 Lettuce variety
66 Ending of the Pledge of Allegiance
67 Pizzazz
68 Phrase in the '99 news
73 Covenant
76 Galoot
77 Kin of etc.
78 Earthquake site, '99
82 Former spouses
83 Foliage unit
85 Bring in the crop
88 Throw rocks
89 Harden into a mold
90 Disquieted
93 Schism
95 N.Y. transit org.
96 Pizza portion
98 Top draft classification
99 Three, in prescriptions
100 —— accompli
101 Hall-of-Fame inductee, '99
105 Tony winner, '99
107 Iowa city
109 Extol
110 Saint Laurent's mentor
112 One of the Grants
113 Disposed to cruelty
115 Exclamation of disgust
116 Spilled the beans
120 "Exodus" hero
121 Oscar-winning film, '99
125 "My turn!"
126 Lose weight
127 Govt. bond of a sort
128 Chez Eve
129 Actor Cariou
130 The A in YMCA: abbr.
131 Menachem's co-Nobelist
132 Bank (on)

DOWN

1 Date tree
2 It's a sin to tell it, in a song
3 Citizen of Latvia
4 Ranges of coverage
5 Put in a new battery
6 Bath step-ons
7 Yes, at the altar
8 Suds remover
9 Prefix with iliac
10 —— de mer
11 Great Plains Indian
12 Precede
13 Firemen's targets
14 Veteran, so to speak
15 Emmy-winning comedy series, '99
16 Pepe —— (cartoon skunk)
17 Strikes an attitude
21 Between fa and la
24 Pirate's take
25 Some well-diggers
30 J.F.K. Jr. in the '99 newspapers
32 "Silly" fowl
33 Super Bowl M.V.P. quarterback, '99
35 Icicle locales
36 Habitat
37 Underground conduit
38 Defense ditch
40 Charged atom
41 Dyer's tub
44 Hard feelings
46 Song for 10-Across
47 Knitter's buy
49 Gasp for breath
51 No-fat
52 Afflictions
53 Banana treat
56 Encounters
58 Phone button 2
60 Slangily lawful
62 What money may burn in one's pocket
64 Short-order sandwich
65 —— grudge (holds a grievance)
69 Scottish negatives
70 "—— first you don't succeed . . ."
71 Taproom order
72 Thomas or Condé
73 Cribbage pieces
74 Figure-skating jump
75 Grammy winner, '99
79 NOW member
80 Bit of buffoonery
81 Opposite of o'er
84 Deadly hurricane, '99
86 Rubinstein of the keyboard
87 Like Hamelin's piper
90 Theologian's study: abbr.
91 Alfonso XIII's queen
92 Parody, mod style
94 Having more ruffles
97 Mozart's "—— Fan Tutte"
100 Not as sturdy
102 Tennis great Gibson
103 Water nymphs
104 Commotion
105 "Waltz King" Strauss
106 Faculty executive
107 Cry of the Ancient Mariner
108 Gower Champion's wife
111 "—— Kick Out of You"
114 Russ. state, under Communism
116 Bacchus' initial
117 Portend
118 First name in daredevilry
119 Disavow
122 Greenspan's subj.
123 Dry, as wine
124 Ply the oars



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 125.